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ABSTRACT

A study examined career opportunities for women in social science research careers in the United Kingdom. Data were collected from the following sources: review of literature/data on women in social science research and their career prospects; survey of Economic and Social Research Council research centers and independent research instituted to generate a gender profile of staff in 50 major research organizations; and interviews with 24 female researchers in a range of sectors, disciplines, and organizational positions/career stages. Overall, women were well represented among social science researchers; however, they were disproportionately concentrated in the lower levels of the researcher hierarchy. Representation of women in the individual social science research disciplines varied widely by discipline, with government social research showing a relatively high proportion of women in top positions and the university sector, government economic service, and independent institutes showing relatively low proportions of women in top positions. It was concluded that the difficulty of combining work and family life remains one of the key factors contributing to women's labor market disadvantage in social science research. (Twenty-three tables/figures and 83 references are included. Appended are the following: a list of organizations contacted; a questionnaire; and a draft concordat on contract research.) (MN)

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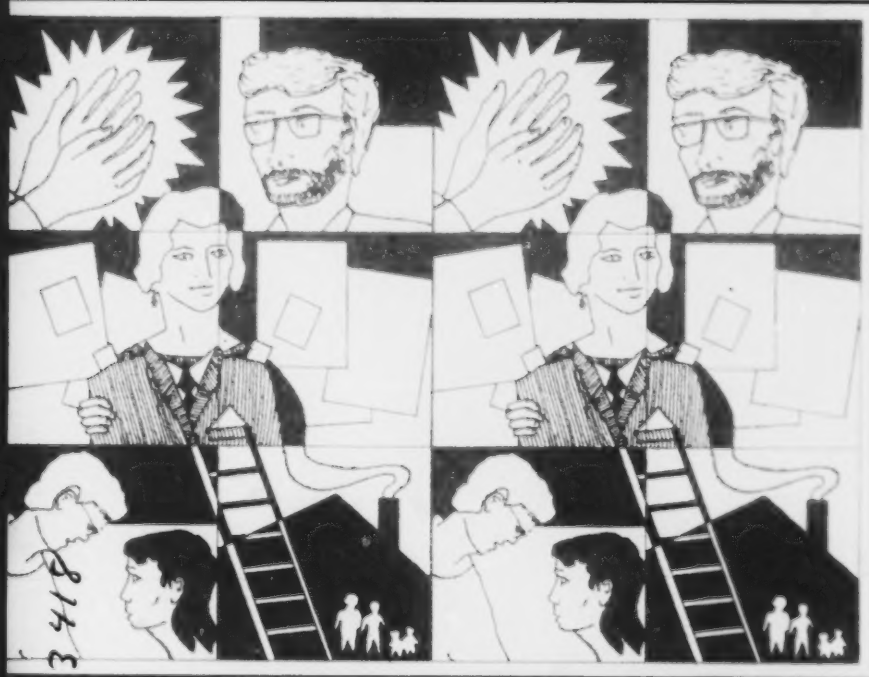
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CAREERS

G Court, J Rick, S Dench,
I La Valle, J Moralee



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1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a study commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on equal opportunities in social science research careers. The focus of the study was on women's careers although where possible information on the experiences of women from ethnic minorities has also been sought.

This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section outlines the background to the research. We then move on to detail the aims of the project and then the methodological approach used to generate the findings presented in subsequent chapters. The final section of Chapter 1 provides information on the structure of the rest of the report.

1.1 Background

Women's experience of the labour market has changed substantially over the past few decades and they now account for 45 per cent of the total workforce. Although women remain concentrated in lower level occupations such as clerical and secretarial work and sales positions, there has been a shift toward greater participation in the professions. Key examples here include accountancy, banking, the law and medicine. Despite recent gains, however, women tend to remain under-represented in several areas of activity, such as engineering, science, information technology *etc.* (Devine, 1992; Court and Moralee, 1995). In addition, even where they account for a substantial proportion of a profession, they are concentrated in the lower levels of the professional hierarchy (Hansard, 1990; Court, 1995).

A combination of demographic and socio-economic trends means that women's labour force participation is projected to continue rising into the next decade. As a result, they are expected to account for four-fifths of the forecast increase in the civilian labour force to the year 2006. In recognition of this, several recent publications have highlighted the cost of failing to realise fully the potential of this increasingly female labour force (*eg* the 1993 White Paper *Realising Our Potential*; *The Rising Tide: A report on Women in Science, Engineering and Technology*). This is particularly the case now that women's educational attainment is rapidly achieving parity with, and among younger women,

surpassing, that of men. As a result, not only are women contributing more to the economy as a whole, but they account for an increasing proportion of the most highly qualified, skilled professional employees.

Within this context, the *Women in Science, Engineering and Technology* Report identified two key equal opportunity problem areas: attracting women into science, engineering and technology (SET) in the first place and, once they enter, the barriers they face in achieving their full career potential. In the social sciences, women are somewhat better represented among academic staff (see Chapter 2 below). As in SET, however, they are under-represented among teaching staff and over-represented among research staff, most of whom are on fixed-term contracts. Figures for all subjects also show that even among research staff, women are concentrated in the lower grades and are under-represented at higher levels (Commission on University Career Opportunity, 1994).

These patterns indicate that the situation in the social sciences is similar to that in other professions — relative to men, women are under-represented in the profession as a whole and those who have successfully entered a research career tend to be concentrated in the lower levels of the professional hierarchy.

Apart from these broad patterns, there is more limited information on the situation and career prospects of women who have opted for a research career in the social sciences. There are a number of studies of women in academia as well as those on the labour market for postgraduate social scientists, (Morley, 1994; Acker, 1993; Pearson *et al.*, 1991). The former, however, have focused primarily on university teaching staff or the academic sector, while the latter have not tended to explore research careers and equal opportunities in depth. In particular, comparatively little is known about the substantial number of women working as researchers outside the university sector, many of whom will have begun their careers in academia. This report seeks to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of women researchers in the social sciences.

1.2 Aims of the research

The current project is part of a wider ESRC review of research careers in the social sciences. Within the overall remit of investigating equal opportunities for social science researchers, the main aims of the study were:

- To assess the current situation of women researchers in the social sciences, focusing on their careers in the university sector, the government research service, and independent research institutes (IRIs), but including, where available, additional information on other relevant sectors (*eg* market research).

- To examine the extent to which women's situations and experiences vary by social science discipline, focusing in particular on sociology/social policy, economics, geography and psychology.
- To investigate women's views on their career prospects and any barriers to advancement.

1.3 Method

The research project was conducted between June and September 1995, with the total input during that time being 30 days. The timing of the research over the summer was particularly unfortunate for this project. In particular, we found it extremely difficult to contact individuals in the university sector and this delayed progress on a number of fronts.

The research entailed three main stages:

- A literature and data review which aimed to collate existing data and research on women in social science research and their career prospects.
- A survey of ESRC Research Centres and Independent Research Institutes. This was designed to generate information on the gender profile of staff in 50 major research organisations.
- Face-to-face or telephone interviews with 24 women researchers in a range of sectors, disciplines and organisational positions/career stages.

Each of these stages is discussed in more detail below.

1.3.1 Literature and data review

The literature and data review involved a wide ranging search for information on women social scientists and their research careers. As noted above, there is no single source of information on issues relevant to the topic and, apart from the literature on women academics, there are relatively few existing studies on women's experiences as social science researchers. In order to assess the overall situation of women in social science we therefore drew on an eclectic range of data from a number of sources. These included:

- the Universities' Statistical Record staffing data for the old universities (the Higher Education Statistics Agency will in the future provide staffing data on the entire university sector but was unable to do so in the timeframe of this project)
- the Employment Department and the Treasury on the government research service

- studies of part-time university staff and contract research from higher education unions (NAFTHE and the AUT)
- professional bodies such as the British Sociological Association, the British Psychological Society, the Housing Studies Association *etc.*[1]
- other relevant organisations (the Market Research Society and the Social Research Association).

1.3.2 Survey of Research Centres and Institutes

A survey of independent research institutes (IRIs) and ESRC-funded research centres was conducted to collect information on each organisation's employment profile and the situation of women and men within it. In both cases we used the ESRC's definition of these research organisations. They were sent a two page questionnaire on 20 July 1995 and, where necessary, a reminder in late August.

The questionnaire gathered details of the numbers of men and women, both full-and part-time, at each main research or lecturing grade within the organisations sampled. It also asked for the minimum and maximum salary points for each grade, numbers of women and men from different ethnic backgrounds at each grade and the type of contract used for women and men working full time and part time. In addition, the questionnaire asked for details of policies on equal opportunities and flexible working hours (see Appendix 2). A sample description is given below.

Fifty-three organisations were identified initially to take part in the survey. Of the total, two had no research staff and one was in the process of closing down, so these were dropped from the sampling frame. Of the remaining 50 organisations, 33 responded, giving an overall response rate of 66 per cent. However, four organisations declined to take part in the research and one questionnaire was unusable, giving a total usable response rate of 56 per cent.

The achieved sample consisted of 13 ESRC centres and 15 IRIs employing a total of 1,291 staff, of whom 729 worked directly in research.

1.3.3 Interviews

This part of the study involved a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviews with 24 women researchers. The

[1] See Appendix 1 for the range of organisations contacted. Many, including the Royal Economic Society were unable to provide the information requested, mainly because membership was not recorded by gender.

individuals were drawn from each of the three key sectors being investigated: the university sector (old and new universities), independent institutes and the government sector. Half of the interviews (12) were arranged with women in universities and six each were with women in the other two sectors. A total of eight were conducted by telephone, with the remainder being undertaken face-to-face.

1.4 Structure of the report

The rest of the report is divided into five chapters. The first three are concerned with an analysis of the situation of women in social science research careers in the three key sectors we focused upon: academia, research institutes and the government sector. We then move on to discuss women's careers and the issues raised in existing studies and the interviews undertaken as part of this study. The report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 summarises the situation of women in the academic sector
- Chapter 3 presents the findings of the survey of research centres and independent institutes
- Chapter 4 focuses on the government sector and presents data on the situation of women in government social research and the economic service
- Chapter 5 looks at the issues around women's career progression which emerged from the literature review and the interviews
- Chapter 6 details the conclusions of the study and presents a series of recommendations.

The findings are supplemented by three Appendices. The first lists the professional bodies contacted as part of the literature and data review. The second presents a copy of the questionnaire survey sent to research centres and independent organisations. The third is a copy of the recent Draft Concordat on Contract Researchers.

2. Women in Academia

This chapter summarises information on women in the academic sector, focusing on social scientists in research only and contract posts. Where possible we provide data on both old and new universities. Staffing details on the former polytechnics are, however, scarce and most of the information presented relates to the old universities.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first looks at the situation of women in social science at the undergraduate and postgraduate level. This provides the context for the discussion in the rest of the chapter which looks first at the gender composition of academic staff, then at women on the ESRC's Council and Boards, and finally at women's representation in professional bodies.

2.1 Women social scientists: graduates and postgraduates

This section highlights women's representation among the student population, looking first at data on first degree graduates and postgraduates and then at information from the ESRC on awards for postgraduate study.

2.1.1 The student population

Table 2.1 provides information on women's share of total students

Table 2.1: Women social science graduates and postgraduates 1993/4 unless specified (women as % total)

	Economics	Sociology	Social policy	Anthro-pology	Psychology	Geography	Total social studies	Total business & financial studies
First degree [1992/3] (new universities)	27.8	70.4	72.8	69.4	80.6	48.8	57.2	48.9
First degree (old universities)	30.1	70.7	72.2	74.1	78.7	46.8	48.4	43.7
Other higher quals (old universities)	30.8	54.6	57.8	62.4	72.2	40.0	46.2	30.0
PhD (old universities)	19.2	40.8	50.0	64.7	50.0	27.3	32.0	24.5

Source: USR 1993/4 and AGCAS 1992/3

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at first degree, masters (other postgraduate qualifications) and PhD level.

Two clear patterns emerge from the data presented in the table:

- women are consistently better represented at first degree level than at PhD level, suggesting that proportionately fewer women than men are gaining the qualifications which would facilitate entry to a research career
- there is considerable variation by discipline at all levels, with women being better represented in sociology, social policy, anthropology and psychology than in economics and geography.

2.1.2 ESRC postgraduate awards

These differences are also reflected in the number of candidates for ESRC postgraduate awards. Data for 1993 and 1994 have been aggregated in Table 2.2 because of the small numbers in some subjects. The subject categories used by the ESRC are not exactly the same as those used for the data on students in Table 2.1, but Table 2.2 shows that women consistently account for a lower proportion of total applicants for research competition awards than their representation among first degree graduates. A similar tendency is evident for coursework awards although here the pattern is less consistent and the discrepancy less marked. It is, however, noticeable that in most subjects women form a higher proportion of applicants for coursework awards than for research awards. This may be indicative of different career aspirations, but it may also be a result of differences between women and men in the level of encouragement they receive from tutors and lecturers.

In addition, women's share of total applicants also varies substantially by discipline, being highest in education, psychology and social policy and lowest in economics and politics.

Analysis of data on the proportion of women and men offered ESRC awards and those taking them up shows little difference, although women are slightly less likely to take up the offer of an award. Overall, 25 per cent of male applicants and 26 per cent of female applicants were offered a research award in 1993-4 and 94 per cent of men and 91 per cent of women took up the offers they received. Among coursework award applicants, 21 per cent of men and 24 per cent of women were offered an award, and 86 per cent of men and 83 per cent of women took up the offer.

Ethnic minorities

Data on the ethnic group of candidates for research and coursework awards show that:

Table 2.2: Applicants for research and coursework competition awards 1993-94 by gender

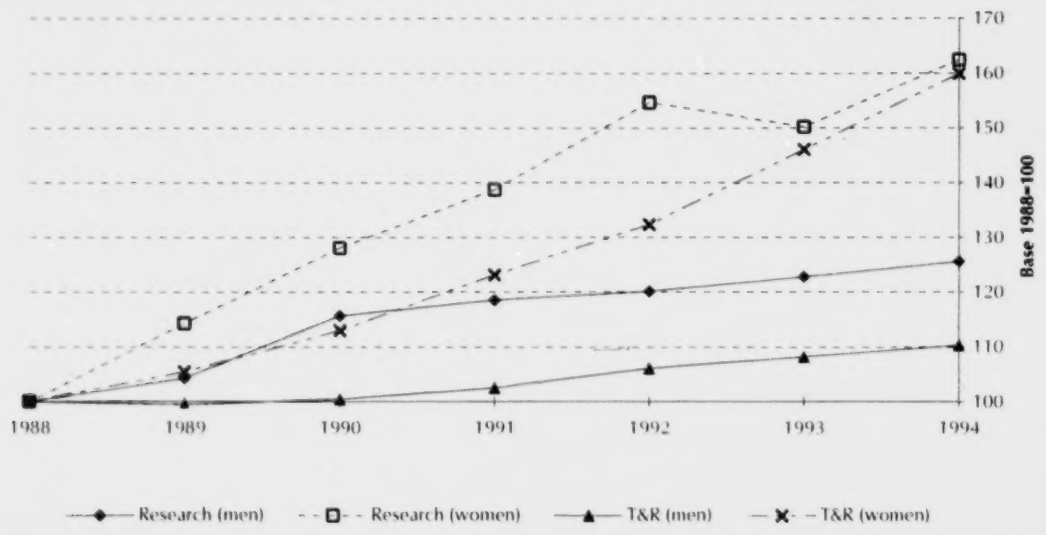
Subject	Research awards			Coursework awards		
	Women	Men	% women	Women	Men	% women
Economics	37	145	20.3	211	594	26.2
Education	89	58	60.5	50	15	76.9
Human geography	139	231	37.6	88	97	47.6
Management and business studies	51	112	31.3	120	128	48.4
Politics and international relations	177	400	30.7	250	594	29.6
Psychology	264	163	61.8	250	146	63.1
Social anthropology	84	68	55.3	156	66	70.3
Sociology	202	183	52.5	305	198	60.6
Economic and social history	57	94	37.8	57	98	36.8
Area studies	32	45	41.6	316	292	52.0
Linguistics	22	25	46.8	39	22	63.9
Multi-disciplinary	68	49	58.1	0	0	–
Planning	25	68	26.9	307	319	49.0
Social policy	75	44	63.0	134	51	72.4
Socio-legal studies	46	33	58.2	176	93	65.4
Social statistics etc.	9	9	50.0	169	215	44.0
Total	*1,377*	*1,727*	*44.4*	*2,628*	*2,928*	*47.3*

Source: ESRC data on awards for 1993 and 1994 combined

- for research awards the ethnic origin of nine per cent of candidates was not known, a figure which declined to four per cent among coursework award candidates
- those of Asian origin accounted to three per cent of research award and five per cent of coursework award candidates in 1993-4
- black students accounted for less than two per cent of total applicants for both types of award
- white students accounted for 86 per cent of research and 88 per cent of coursework awards in 1993-4.

Again, there is no evidence of candidates from ethnic minority groups being under-represented in terms of the proportion being offered awards and those taking them up. Without additional information on the ethnic group profile of social science subjects, however, it is not possible to know whether members of minority groups are less likely to apply, or be encouraged to apply, for awards.

Figure 2.1: Change in the number of women and men full-time staff in the old universities' social science cost centres by type of post (Research-only or Teaching and Research) 1988-1994 (Base 1988=100)



Source: USR Staffing data 1988-1994

2.2. Women in academia

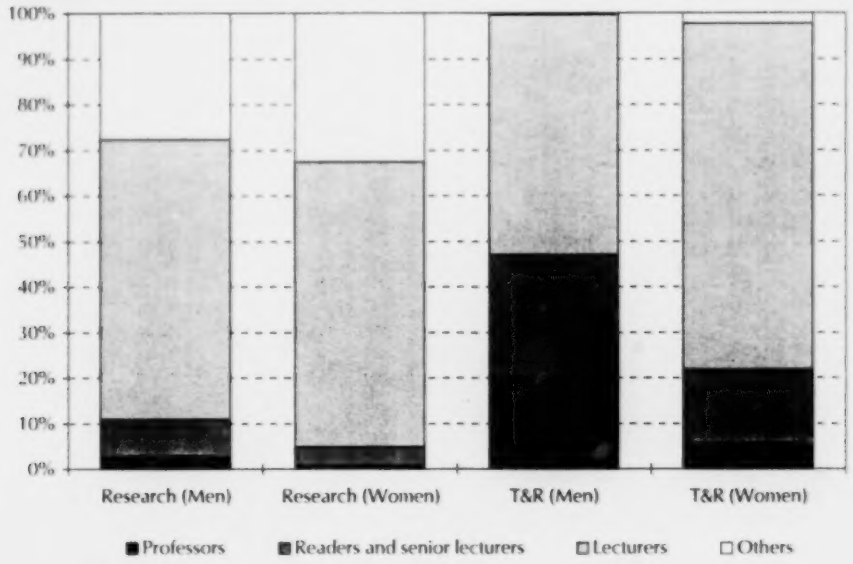
2.2.1 The old universities

Data on full-time staff in the old university sector show that the number of women in social science-related cost centres[1] has increased rapidly since 1988 (by 62 per cent compared to 12 per cent for men). For women, the increase has been similar for both teaching and research, and research only posts (Figure 2.1).

Women are, therefore, entering academia. They continue to account, however, for a disproportionate number of staff on the lower levels of the hierarchy (lecturers) and are more likely than their male counterparts to be research-only or contract (not wholly university funded) staff. For example, 76 per cent of women teaching and research staff (as opposed to research only staff) in administrative, business and social studies cost centres are lecturers. Among men this proportion falls to 53 per cent (Figure 2.2).

[1] The USR data on university staff provides information on cost centres and cost centre groups. The group most closely approximating the social sciences is administrative, business and social studies. This comprises psychology, geography, law, other social studies, business and management studies and accountancy. This categorisation is not particularly useful for this study in that economics and sociology are aggregated into other social studies.

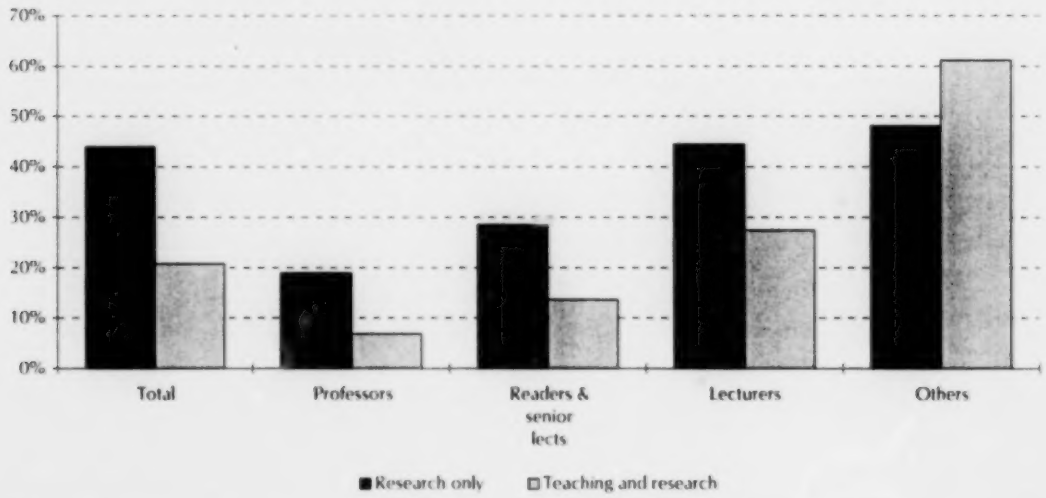
Figure 2.2: Staff in social science cost centres in old universities by grade, type of post and gender 1994 (T&R = teaching and research)



Source: USR

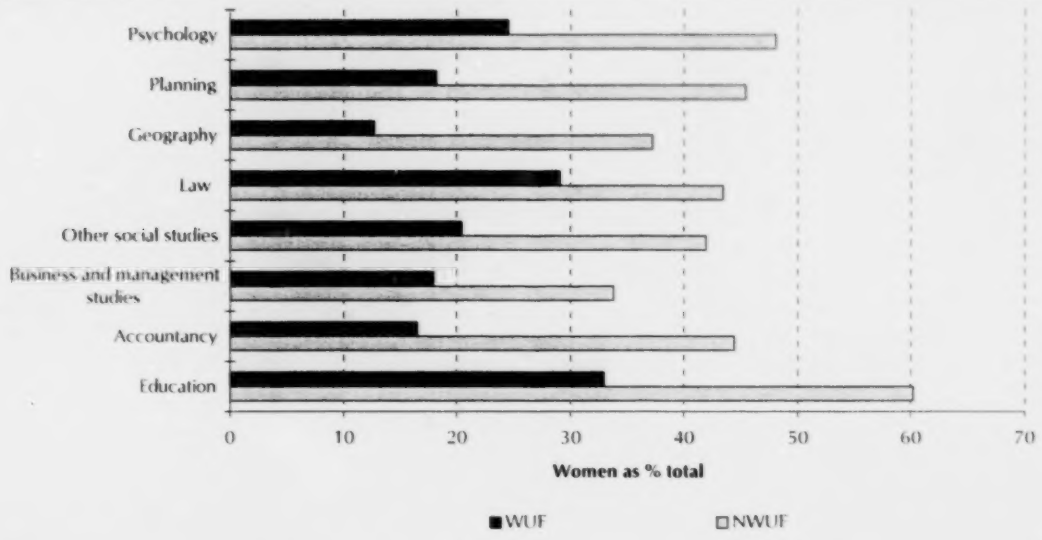
Not only are women over-represented among lecturing grade staff relative to professorial grade staff, but they also form a higher proportion of total research-only staff in each grade than is the case for teaching and research staff (Figure 2.3). Research-only posts tend to be less permanent and of a lower status than teaching and research posts, and women's over-representation in them only serves to reinforce their marginal status within academia.

Figure 2.3: Women as a per cent of full-time staff in social science cost centres by status 1994



Source: USR

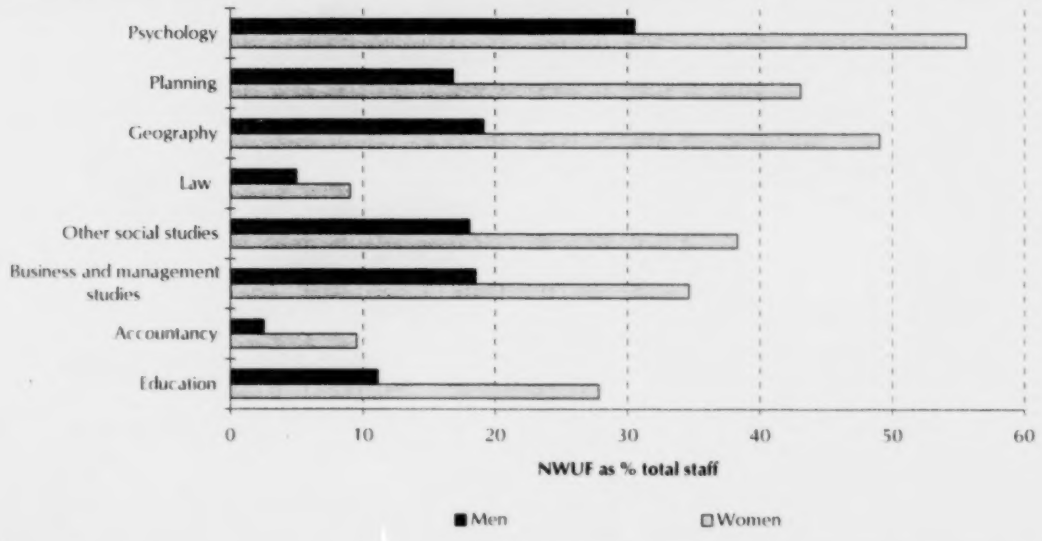
Figure 2.4: Women as a proportion of total full-time staff in old universities by selected subject 1994



Source: USR

There are, however, variations in women's representation by discipline. They form a higher proportion of those in psychology, for example, than in geography and business and management studies (Figure 2.4). In each of the social science disciplines for which data are available, women account for a higher proportion of contract staff (not wholly university funded) than their male counterparts (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Proportion of women and men full-time staff who are not wholly university funded (NWUF — contract staff) by selected discipline 1994



Source: USR

It is unfortunate that separate data on economics and sociology are not available. A recent study by the American Economic Association's Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession, however, reveals a familiar pattern. Women represented almost ten per cent of faculty in PhD granting institutions. This proportion, however, varied widely by level of employment, with women accounting for 22 per cent of assistant professors (roughly equal to UK lecturers), ten per cent of associate professors and four per cent of full professors. The study looked at the extent to which there was a gap between the rate at which women are being hired and promoted and their share in the rank below. It found that somewhat fewer women were being promoted through the ranks than would be expected: the share of women hired and promoted consistently falls a few percentage points below their representation at the next lower level (CSWEP, 1994). The study also found some evidence of a higher drop-out rate among women economics PhD students. In the first year of the PhD, women accounted for 30 per cent of students, a figure which declined to 24 per cent of those receiving PhDs (*ibid.*).

The above analysis for economics is entirely consistent with a study on the university sector more generally undertaken by the Commission on University Career Opportunity (1994) a body established by the CVCP in 1993. This showed that women accounted for a third of academic staff on the Lecturer A scale, one fifth of those on the Lecturer B scale and just one in 20 of those at professorial level. Among research staff the picture was similarly stark, with women accounting for almost 44 per cent of those on Grade 1B, a proportion which declined steadily to 11 per cent of research staff on Grade III (CUCO, 1994).

2.2.2 The new universities

Much less detail is available on staff in the new universities. The information we do have, however, shows similar patterns to those outlined above: women are not as well represented as men overall and are concentrated at the lower end of the academic hierarchy (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Academic staff in new universities: grade by gender (total full-time staff only)

	% on grade		Women as % of total on grade
	Men	Women	
Lecturer	7.8	21.0	45.6
Senior lecturer	62.9	63.5	24.0
Principal lecturer	23.7	13.1	14.7
Above principal lecturer	5.5	2.4	12.0
Total	*100.0*	*100.0*	*23.8*

Source: CUCO, 1994 (data from PCFC Information document — The Academic Staff of Polytechnics and Colleges 1991)

2.2.3 Issues for contract researchers

The above analyses have highlighted that women account for a disproportionate number of contract research staff in the university sector. The career prospects of such staff must therefore be an issue for any analysis of equal opportunities in research careers. The careers of contract staff are the subject of a related study to the present one and we do not go into generic issues in detail here. A number of concerns raised in several recent studies are, however, important to note in the context of this study, primarily because they indicate that the career prospects of contract researchers in academia are not as good as those of lecturing staff.

There is general agreement in the literature that contract research is characterised by a range of factors which highlights its low status in the academic hierarchy. These include:

- job insecurity[1]
- lack of opportunities for promotion and career progress[2]
- lack of recognition of the importance of the role of contract research
- lack of staff development or training
- poor record of equal opportunities in the employment of contract researchers (Bryson and Tulle-Winton, 1994).

Of particular significance in the context of this study is the difficulty contract researchers have combining work and family life. Researchers are less likely to qualify for maternity leave and pay than other staff and may be put into a position of having to use annual leave in order to take a break to have a baby (Bryson and Tulle-Winton, 1994).

In an attempt to address some of these issues a draft concordat between the research councils, the CVCP, the Royal Society and other bodies was announced in July 1995. The concordat seeks to ensure more effective career management of contract research staff through a range of principles and provisions including:

- promoting the active personnel and career management of contract researchers
- ensuring that universities accept the importance of appraisal and career guidance for contract researchers

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[1] A recent study of contract staff in geography departments found that 80 per cent of respondents cited the inability to plan as an important disadvantage of contract work (Bromley, 1995).

[2] Highlighted as an important disadvantage by 67 per cent of respondents in the Bromley (1995) study.

- the provision of additional funding to provide for the additional final cost of making a substitute appointment to compensate for the whole, or part, of a period of paid maternity leave of a member of contract research staff funded by a Research Council
- the possibility of extending the duration of a grant for a period equivalent to the maternity leave taken by a member of contract research staff for which no substitute appointment has been made (DTI, 1995; CVCP, 1995).

2.2.4 Part-time staff

Information by gender on part-time staff in the university sector is mainly available via one-off studies. A recent report by the AUT highlights the rapid growth in part-time staff in the old university sector, reporting a rise of 71 per cent over the decade to 1993 (from 2,865 to 4,908). The increase has been particularly rapid among women, whose share of total part-time employment in universities increased from 38 to 59 per cent between 1983 and 1993. The majority of part-time staff are employed on fixed-term contracts (averaging 1.2 years in length) (AUT, 1995). In the new universities a recent survey found that half of part-time lecturing staff are women, a higher proportion than their representation among full-time staff (24 per cent) (NATFHE, undated).

The two studies cited above found that a large proportion of part-time staff were employed on teaching-only contracts. This was confirmed in a recent study of geography departments which reported that more than four-fifths of part-timers were employed for teaching rather than research. While the majority of those in the study were working part-time out of preference, a number of disadvantages to such employment were highlighted (Bromley, 1995). These included:

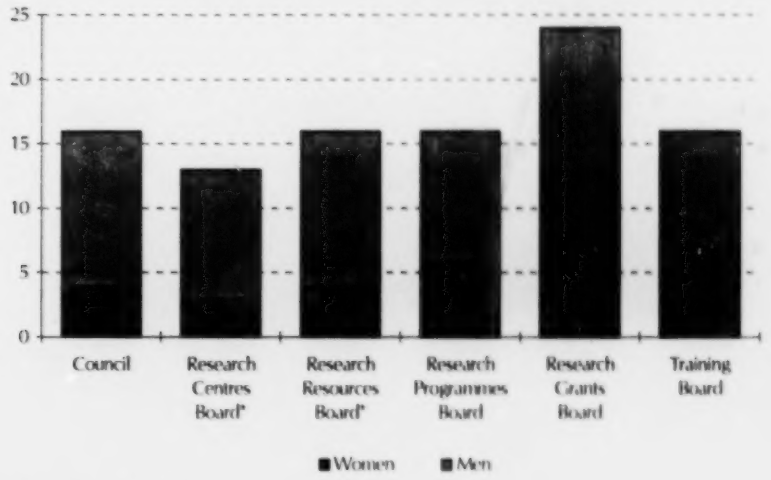
- poor pay (54 per cent)
- inability to plan (34 per cent)
- poor promotion prospects (34 per cent)
- low status (22 per cent).

2.3 Women in the ESRC

This section summarises information on the ESRC's Council and Boards in order to assess the extent to which women are represented in one of the major institutions governing access to postgraduate funding and research activity.

Overall, women account for a almost a third (32 per cent) of members of the ESRC's Council and Boards (Figure 2.6) This is higher than their representation among full-time staff in

Figure 2.6: Women and men on the ESRC's Council and Boards 1994-95 (numbers)



* Includes one female member with a role on two Boards

Source: ESRC

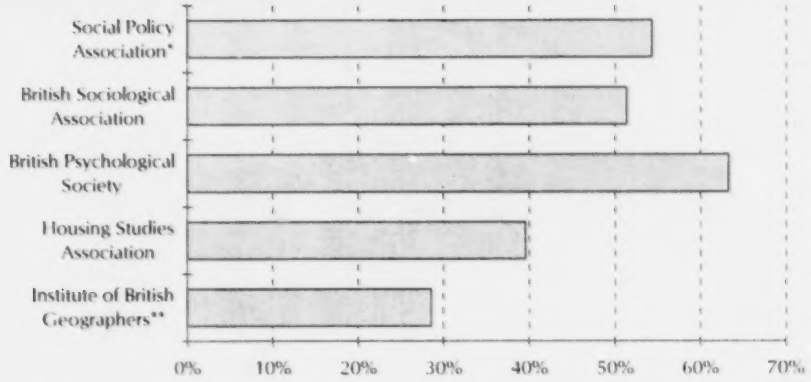
administrative, business and social studies costs centres in the universities (where they represent 25 per cent of all staff and 21 per cent of teaching and research staff). They are best represented on the Training Board (44 per cent) and Research Programmes Board (38 per cent) and less well represented on the Research Centres Board (23 per cent) and Research Resources Board (25 per cent). Again, the numbers involved are small and the movement on or off the Boards of a few individuals can make a big difference to the percentages of women and men. Nevertheless, Figure 2.6 suggests that women are less well represented in activities associated with research funding than training. The importance of research activity in the current higher education climate needs to be noted here. We were not, however, able to obtain details of the proportion of total ESRC research funding allocated to women, or the success rate of applications for funding by gender.

2.4 Women in professional bodies

These patterns are reflected in data on the membership of the various professional bodies for which data on membership by gender are available. In the first place, they comprise a higher proportion of those in the SPA, the BSA and BPS than in the former IBG and Regional Studies Association (Figure 2.7).

At the same time, however, even where they are well represented overall, there is evidence from some societies to suggest that women do not account for an equally high proportion of members in higher status categories. For example, while almost two thirds of total members of the BPS are women, they account for only 16 per cent of Fellows and 23 per cent of Honorary Fellows (British Psychological Society, 1995).

Figure 2.7: Women as a proportion of total members of selected professional bodies 1994/5



* Excludes a small number of individuals whose gender was not known.
** *Includes professional members only (ie not postgraduates).*

Source: SPA, BSA, BPS, HSA, M Byron for the Equal Opportunities Working Group of the former IBG

Similarly, women account for just over a half of all members (51 per cent) of the BSA. Among those with higher earnings, however, this proportion falls, such that they represent only 28 per cent of those earning £30,000 and over. In the former IBG, male professors accounted for nine per cent of the total membership, a figure which declined to less than one per cent for women at the same level (M Byron for the Equal Opportunities Working Group of the former IBG, 1994).

We cannot tell from these figures, however, whether this under-representation at the top of the profession is due to women's lack of career progression or to their being relatively recent entrants to the societies and therefore at an early stage in their career.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has looked at the situation of women social scientists in academic institutions and associated professional bodies. It has shown that while women have successfully entered social science both as students and academic research and teaching staff, they remain under-represented in more senior positions. Relative to the number of first degree graduates in social science subjects, there are also indications that women are under-represented at the postgraduate level and in academic positions. There are wide variations between subjects, with women accounting for a majority of academics in areas such as psychology, and a smaller proportion of those in disciplines such as geography and economics.

The data do not, however, allow us to determine whether women's under-representation at the top of the academic hierarchy is due to their relatively recent entry into the profession or to slower career progression/higher drop-out

rates. Conclusive evidence of this would require a longitudinal study. This issue is, however, one which is common to a wide range of occupations, including the other research sectors in this study, and will be addressed further in Chapter 5.

Women are also disproportionately concentrated in research posts, most of which are fixed-term positions according lower status, and more limited career development and promotion prospects than those offered to teaching staff.

3. Independent Institutes and Research Centres

This chapter details the findings of a survey of independent research institutes (IRIs) and ESRC funded research centres. It is based on a survey of organisations undertaken between July and September 1995 (see 1.3.2 for details). In total, information from 13 ESRC Research Centres and 15 IRIs was obtained. These organisations employed a total of 1,291 staff, including 728 research staff.

The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first summarises details of the categorisation of jobs into a consistent series of grades. We then go on to look at the distribution of women and men by grade and to summarise the ethnic group background of researchers. The next section turns to the issue of the type of contracts on which researchers are employed. Finally, the extent to which organisations have written equal opportunities and flexible working policies, is discussed.

3.1 Classifying jobs into grades

Organisations differed in the number of grades they identified in their grading structure. By far the majority of organisations (21) identified four or five grades. Where fewer job grades were shown, this was almost exclusively due to the fact that the most senior posts (*eg* directors) were not included in the details provided (accurately so if they were not research posts). To enable comparison across organisations, two independent raters assigned job grades within each organisation to one of five levels. This was done primarily on the basis of the hierarchical structure of the organisation, using additional information on salary ranges to ensure consistency across different job titles.

In the following analyses therefore, Level 1 represents the most senior posts, (*eg* Professor, Director, Head of Programmes, Associate Director). Level 2 consists of posts such as Senior Research Fellow, Principle Research Fellow/Officer, Project Manager *etc*. Level 3 is made up of grades such as Research Fellow and Associate, while Level 4 equates to more junior Research Fellows/Associates and Research Officers. Level 5 grades include Research Assistants and junior Research Officers. Table 3.1 gives the minimum and maximum salaries associated with each level.

Table 3.1: Salary by grade for all researchers

Level	Salary min.	Salary max.	Average min.	Average max.	Average salary
1	16,000	57,009	29,835	36,092	32,964
2	14,756	53,324	24,755	31,198	27,976
3	11,250	39,066	18,639	27,104	22,871
4	12,000	30,123	14,730	21,404	18,067
5	11,253	20,953	13,803	16,942	15,372

Source: IES Survey

3.2 Gender, grade and ethnic origin

Women accounted for 59 per cent of total employment in the organisations responding to the survey. As might be expected, they were better represented among non-research employees than researchers, accounting for 79 per cent of the former and 43 per cent of the latter. The proportion of researchers who are women in the organisations surveyed is very close to the figure for university social science-related cost centres shown in Figure 2.3 (44 per cent).

3.2.1 Distribution by grade

A further breakdown is given in Table 3.2 of the numbers of men and women working at each of the five grades. Percentages are given for: all researchers (a); women in each level as a percentage of all women researchers in that type of organisation (b); and men at each level as a percentage of all men in that type of organisation (c).

Around a tenth of all researchers in the organisations in the sample work at the highest level. However, only three and a half to four per cent of women work at this level as opposed to about 15 per cent of men. These proportions are similar within both ESRC funded centres and IRIs. Between Levels 1 and 3, the proportion of women and men working at each level rises as jobs become more junior. Thereafter, Levels 4 and 5 account for a smaller proportion of researchers. Women, however, are concentrated in the lower three grades, with 82 per cent working at this level compared to 64 per cent of men. There is some variation by type of organisation in this pattern, with 84 per cent of women in IRIs employed in Levels 3 to 5 compared to 78 per cent in the research centres.

Overall, just over a quarter (28 per cent) of all researchers work in the two most senior levels (Levels 1 and 2) and there is relatively little variation between the two main types of organisation. There is however a difference in terms of the proportions of women and men in these levels. In the IRIs, a smaller proportion of women work in the top two grades than is the case in research centres (16 per cent compared to 22 per cent).

Table 3.2: Distribution of research staff by grade, sex and type of institution (unless specified figures outside of brackets are percentages)

	All research organisations			ESRC			IRIs		
Level	Total (a)	Women (b)	Men (c)	Total (a)	Women (b)	Men (c)	Total (a)	Women (b)	Men (c)
1	10.3	3.5	15.3	11.8	4.0	16.1	9.2	3.3	14.7
(Number)	(74)	(11)	(63)	(34)	(4)	(30)	(40)	(7)	(33)
2	17.6	14.6	19.7	15.7	18.0	14.3	18.8	13.1	24
(Number)	(127)	(46)	(81)	(45)	(18)	(27)	(82)	(28)	(54)
3	32.2	35.0	29.6	20.9	23.0	19.9	39.4	40.7	37.8
(Number)	(232)	(110)	(122)	(60)	(23)	(37)	(172)	(87)	(85)
4	27.2	31.2	23.8	32.7	39.0	29.6	23.3	27.6	19.1
(Number)	(196)	(98)	(98)	(94)	(39)	(55)	(102)	(59)	(43)
5	12.7	15.6	10.4	17.7	16.0	18.8	9.4	15.4	3.6
(Number)	(92)	(49)	(43)	(51)	(16)	(35)	(41)	(33)	(8)
Count (=100%)	721	314	407	284	100	184	437	214	223
Missing (no.)	8	3	5	7	2	5	1	1	0
Total (no.)	729	317	412	291	102	189	438	215	223

Source: IES Survey 1995

3.2.2 The representation of women by grade

There are differences across organisations both in the number of women in research jobs and in the proportions of top level posts held by women and men. Although women represent 43 per cent of all researchers, just over a third of ESRC centre researchers (35 per cent) are women compared to nearly half (49 per cent) of IRI researchers (Table 3.3). This may be partly explained by the higher proportion of economics oriented research centres responding to the survey and the lower representation of these types of institutes among the IRI sample.

Overall, women are under-represented in Level 1 jobs and over-represented further down organisational hierarchies. They make up only 15 per cent of researchers in Level 1 jobs, a proportion which is higher among the IRIs than the research centres: in ESRC centres women hold 12 per cent of Level 1 posts, whilst in IRIs this proportion rises to almost 18 per cent. Conversely, women account for a half of researchers in Level 4 and 5 posts.

Table 3.3: Women and men as a percentage of researchers in each grade

	All research organisations		ESRC centres		IRIs	
Level	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
1	14.9%	85.1%	11.8%	88.2%	17.5%	82.5%
(Number)	(11)	(63)	(4)	(30)	(7)	(33)
2	36.2%	63.8%	40%	60%	31.1%	65.9%
(Number)	(46)	(81)	(18)	(27)	(28)	(54)
3	47.6%	52.4%	38.3%	61.7%	50.9%	49.1%
(Number)	(111)	(122)	(23)	(37)	(87)	(85)
4	50%	50%	41.5%	58.5%	57.8%	42.2%
(Number)	(98)	(98)	(39)	(55)	(59)	(43)
5	53.3%	46.7%	31.3%	68.8%	80.5%	19.5%
(Number)	(49)	(43)	(16)	(35)	(33)	(8)
Count	315	407	100	184	214	223
Missing	1	5	2	5	0	0
Total	316	412	102	189	214	223
%	43.4%	56.6%	35%	65%	49%	51%

Source: IES Survey 1995

3.2.3 The gender profile by type of organisational structure

Further analysis of gender by grade was undertaken to identify whether the type of organisational hierarchy influenced the distribution of men and women by grade. This was done by separating out organisations with five identifiable levels of job grade and comparing them with organisations where only four levels of job grade were distinguishable. Results are presented in Table 3.4.

Organisations with four job grades are still represented at five levels in this analysis as one organisation may have jobs which equate to levels one, two, three and four, whilst another organisation's jobs may equate to levels one, three, four and five.

Table 3.4: Percentage of jobs at each level held by women

Level	Organisations with five levels	Organisations with four levels
1	14.6	14.3
2	35.2	34.0
3	47.7	51.1
4	51.5	50.0
5	78.0	40.5

Source: IES Survey 1995

One-third of organisations in the sample had five levels of job grade, these organisations are evenly split between ESRC centres and IRIs.

The seven organisations reporting three or fewer levels of job grade were not included in the analysis. In four cases, this was due to the high level of missing data, and the remaining three organisations were too small in number on which to base an analysis.

Broadly speaking, the proportions of women at levels one to three are the same for organisations with four or five levels and very similar to the figures for all research organisations regardless of level (see Table 3.3). Women are under-represented at the more senior levels (one and two), but by level three the proportions of women and men are more even.

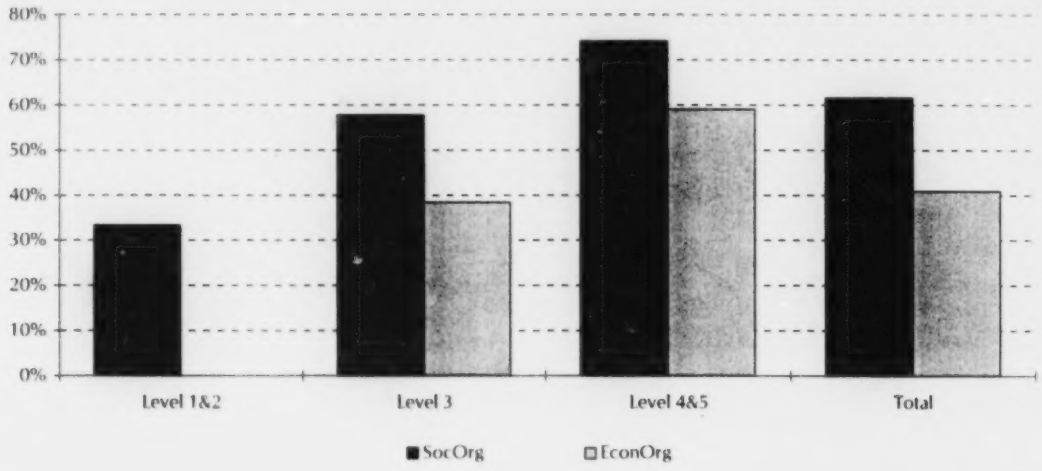
However, it is interesting to note that the proportions of men and women remain relatively equal in the lowest grades of four level organisations (level four or five), but that women are hugely over-represented at the lowest level in organisations with five levels of job grade.

3.2.4 Gender and subject focus of organisation

The results presented in Chapter 2 suggest that women's representation in academic activities varies by subject, although there is a general pattern of women being under-represented at the most senior levels. By taking examples of composites of specific kinds of institutes we were able to explore the extent to which this pattern persists outside academia.

Figure 3.1 shows that in the more economic oriented organisation (EconOrg) women represent 41 per cent of employees while in

Figure 3.1: Women' s share of total employment by Level: EconOrg and SocOrg 1995



Source: IES Survey 1995

Table 3.5: Ethnic background by gender

	Black	Indian/Pakistani/ Bangladeshi	Other	White
Women	1.6%	2.8%	3.5%	90.2%
Men	1.5%	2.2%	1.7%	94.5%
Total	*1.5%*	*2.5%*	*2.6%*	*93.4%*

Source: IES Survey

the more sociologically oriented organisation (SocOrg) their share of employment is greater (62 per cent). In both cases, however, women account for a disproportionate number of those lower down the organisation, while the reverse is the case in the upper levels of the hierarchy. In EconOrg, women comprise 38 per cent of those on levels 4 and 5 (the lowest levels) and are not represented at all at levels 1 and 2. In SocOrg, 74 per cent of level 4 and 5 employees are women compared to 33 per cent of level 1 and 2 employees.

3.2.5 Ethnic origin

Table 3.5 shows the ethnic background by gender for all researchers in the sample. The categories used are the same as for the General Household Survey. People from Black, Indian/ Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Other (non-White) ethnic groups represent just over six and a half per cent of researchers in the whole sample. This is somewhat lower than the representation of these groups in home admissions to degree courses in 1994 (11.5 per cent), but similar to their representation in the population overall (6 per cent) (Court, Jagger and Connor, 1995; Foster *et al.*, 1995).

The small numbers do not permit further breakdown by type of research centre or grade.

3.3 Contract type

Organisations were asked to provide details of the number of women and men on permanent, fixed term, rolling or other contractual agreements within each organisation. Overall, more than two-fifths of researchers in the sample (43 per cent) were on permanent contracts, with all but 14 of the remainder on some form of fixed-term contract.

Major differences in contractual arrangements can been seen when comparisons are made between women and men, and across different types of research organisations.

Table 3.6 contrasts contractual arrangements for women and men, both full- and part-time, for all research organisations. Similar proportions of women and men are on permanent

Table 3.6: Contract type by gender — all research organisations (per cent unless specified)

Contract type	Women			Men		
	All	FT	PT	All	FT	PT
Permanent	44.8	48.1	27.1	41.6	45.3	8.3
(Number)	(139)	(126)	(13)	(152)	(149)	(3)
Fixed-term (3 years and over)	12.6	13.4	8.3	22.7	23.4	16.7
(Number)	(39)	(35)	(4)	(83)	(77)	(6)
Fixed-term (1 year, but less than 3)	30.3	28.6	39.6	23.3	25.2	5.6
(Number)	(94)	(75)	(19)	(85)	(83)	(2)
Fixed-term (less than 1 year)	12.3	9.9	25.0	12.3	6.1	69.4
(Number)	(38)	(26)	(12)	(45)	(20)	(25)
Total (=100%)	*310*	*262*	*48*	*365*	*329*	*36*

Source: IES Survey 1995

contracts (45 and 42 per cent respectively). The main difference between the two groups comes when the type of fixed-term contract is assessed. A relatively small proportion of women (13 per cent) are on fixed-term contracts of over three years, whereas this category accounts for 23 per cent of men. On the other hand, 30 per cent of women are on contracts lasting from one to three years, compared to 23 per cent of men. In both cases about 12 per cent of researchers are on contracts lasting less than one year.

There are also differences by full- and part-time work status. Generally, part-time workers are less likely to be on permanent contracts and more likely to have contracts lasting less than one year. This is particularly the case among men, although the numbers here are small and should be treated with some caution. Among women, 27 per cent of researchers working part-time have permanent contracts, compared to 48 per cent of full-time researchers. The relative ranking of these proportions is reversed for fixed-term contracts of less than one year — 25 per cent of women part-time researchers are on such contracts compared to just ten per cent of full-timers.

Major differences are also evident when contractual agreements are considered across different types of research organisation (Table 3.7). Generally, research centres are less likely to offer permanent contracts than IRIs. In ESRC centres just over one-tenth of women (12 per cent) are on permanent contracts compared with over a fifth of men (23 per cent). By far the majority of women in ESRC centres are on fixed term contracts of less than three years (68 per cent).

By comparison, well over half the women in IRIs are on permanent contracts (61 per cent) and well under a third (30 per cent) are on fixed term contracts less than three years in

Table 3.7:Contract type by research centre (% unless specified)

Contract type	ESRC centres		IRIs	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Permanent	11.7	23.4	61.4	58.4
(Number)	(12)	(41)	(127)	(111)
Fixed-term (3 years and over)	20.4	24.0	8.7	21.6
(Number)	(21)	(42)	(18)	(41)
Fixed-term (1 year, but less than 3)	47.6	32.0	21.7	15.3
(Number)	(49)	(56)	(45)	(29)
Fixed-term (less than 1 year)	20.4	20.6	8.2	4.7
(Number)	(21)	(36)	(17)	(9)
Count (=100%)	*103*	*175*	*207*	*190*

Source: IES Survey

duration. Among men in the IRIs, these proportions are 58 per cent and 20 per cent respectively.

3.4 Equal opportunities and flexible working policies

Two final questions on the questionnaire asked for details of equal opportunities policies and flexible working arrangements. Over a quarter (29 per cent) of the organisations that responded had no written equal opportunities policy, while the other 71 per cent had formal written policies.

Responses on flexible working practices were less clear cut. Over a fifth of organisations (23 per cent) had a clearly stated policy on flexible working hours. Slightly over half of the sample (54 per cent) had no written policy and operated set working hours. The remaining 23 per cent had no clear flexible working hours policy, but had informal arrangements, individually negotiated hours or flexible arrangements at the director's/manager's discretion. A small minority of this third group simply had no policy whatsoever regarding working hours.

3.5 Summary

Twenty-eight organisations responded to the survey, accounting for a total of 728 research staff. Women made up 43 per cent of research staff, but were disproportionately under-represented at senior levels and over-represented at junior levels.

Around ten per cent of research staff were employed at the most senior levels in the organisations sampled. However, three and a half per cent of women and sixteen per cent of men held senior

positions and women made up only 15 per cent of researchers in level one jobs.

Women represent 43 per cent of all researchers, but only 35 per cent of researchers in ESRC centres, although this may partly be explained through bias in the respondent sample.

Women were found to represent 78 per cent of researchers at the lowest level in organisations with five levels, but between 40 and 50 per cent of researchers at the lowest level in organisations with four levels.

Women's representation in organisations varied by subject, with women constituting 41 per cent of employees in the more economic oriented organisations and 62 per cent of employees in the more sociologically oriented organisations. In both types of organisation, however, women are under-represented at higher levels in the organisation and over-represented at the lowest levels.

People from Black, Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Other (non-White) ethnic groups make up just over six per cent of the whole sample of researchers in the organisations surveyed.

Similar proportions of men and women are on permanent contracts, although men on fixed-term contracts are more likely than women to have a contract of over three years in length. Part-time workers are less likely to be on permanent contracts and a greater proportion of women work part time.

Over a quarter of organisations in the sample had no written equal opportunities policy.

Just under a quarter of the organisations sampled had clearly stated policies on flexible working arrangements with the majority (54 per cent) operating set working hours.

4. The Government Sector and Other Social Research

This chapter summarises data on women researchers in the government sector and assesses their situation relative to that of male colleagues. It also summarises additional information from the Market Research Society and the Social Research Association.

4.1 The government sector

We have obtained data on women in two areas of the government service: social research (*ie* people from a range of social science backgrounds [usually excluding economists] who are actively involved in doing or managing social science research) and the economic service.[1] In keeping with patterns identified in Chapter 2, these two sectors show varying patterns. Given that the analysis draws on two distinct sources of data, the two areas of government research activity are discussed separately. Our assessment of the situation of women in government social science is prefaced by a brief overview of women in the Civil Service generally and its equal opportunities campaign.

4.1.1 Women in the Civil Service

Over the past ten years the employment of women in the Civil Service has changed quite considerably. A recent review identified a wide range of changes including:

- the increasing proportion of women in management grade posts. In the first management grade (Executive Officer) women's representation increased from 29 per cent of the total to nearly 47 per cent between 1984 and 1994. At Grade 3 (the third highest level in the hierarchy) they accounted for ten per cent of employees in 1994, up from less than five per cent in 1984 (Cabinet Office, 1995, p. 8). This suggests that while far from equal with men, women are becoming more visible in the upper echelons of the Civil Service.

[1] The data presented in this chapter exclude those in the Government Statistical Service and social scientists working in the planning and resources section of the Department of the Environment. The latter are not formally part of the government social research branch and were not included in the data we received from the Employment Department.

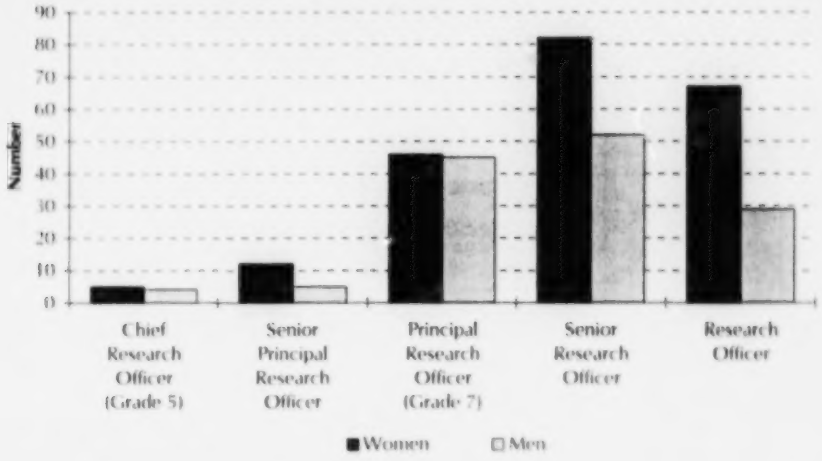
- Women now account for a much higher share of entrants to the Civil Service 'fast stream' (those with the potential to reach at least Grade 5) — 38 per cent in 1993-4 compared to 25 per cent in 1983.
- Although it remains above that of men, the women's resignation rate has declined from 6.2 per cent in 1983-4 to 2.4 per cent a decade later. A decade ago women were almost three times more likely to resign as men, a figure which had declined to one and half times by 1993-4.
- A study tracking the careers of men and women entering the Inland Revenue Department in 1975 and 1985 has found that while men entering in 1975 progressed faster than women entrants, in 1985 this was not so (although sufficient time may not have elapsed for differences to emerge).
- The availability of part-time work in the Civil Service has increased markedly, with 18 per cent of women working part-time in 1994 compared to six per cent a decade earlier. While more prevalent in them, part-time work is not solely confined to the lower grades, with six per cent of Grade 1 women (a total of three) working part time, almost 18 per cent of Grade 5 women (62), and 15 per cent of Grade 7 women (285) working part time.
- In 1994, there were over 45 Civil Service nurseries, an additional 20 were operated in partnership with other organisations, and about 15 where places were bought for staff. Seven years earlier, in 1987, there were no nurseries at all.
- In 1988, women in the Civil Service were more than twice as likely as other women in the public sector to report having access to career break schemes and overwhelmingly more likely to have flexi-time arrangements available (Cabinet Office, 1995).

These changes have occurred during a period in which the Civil Service has adopted a high profile equal opportunities campaign. This has included family friendly working arrangements (part-time work, flexi-time, career breaks, homeworking, childcare, *etc.*), a rigorous monitoring programme looking at the relative success rates of women applying for entry and promotion at all levels, and equal opportunities awareness training. While women remain disadvantaged relative to men in the Civil Service, their situation has improved since the early 1980s. While we cannot be certain that this is the case, it is highly probable that at least part of the improvement is due to the commitment to equality of opportunity for women and the development of a strategy to address existing and emerging inequalities.

4.1.2 Government social research

In social research women are well represented both overall and towards the top of the hierarchy. They comprise 61 per cent (212

Figure 4.1: Government social researchers by grade and gender 1994



Source: Data supplied by the Employment Department

out of a total of 347) of all government social researchers and 56 per cent (five out of a total of nine) of those at the Chief Research Officer level (the most senior level) (Figure 4).

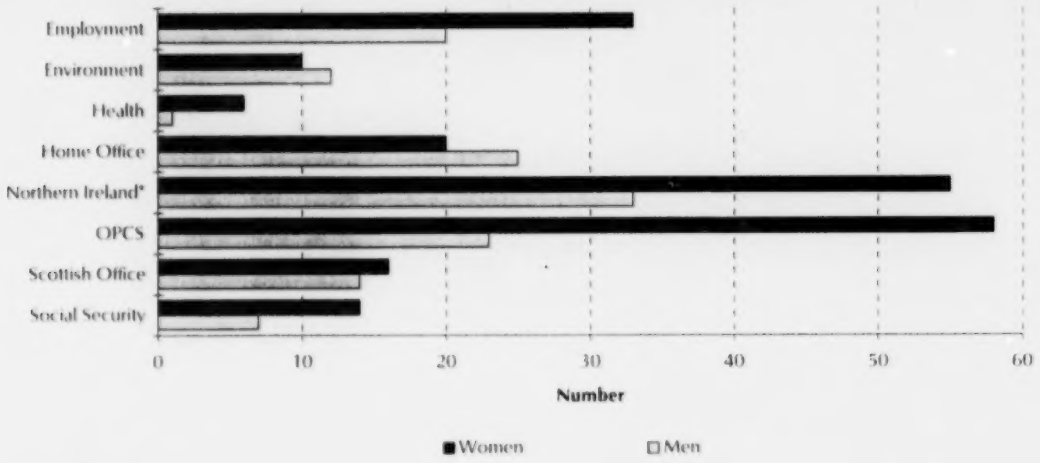
Although women are better represented at the bottom of the hierarchy (comprising 70 per cent of Research Officers) than at the very top, the small numbers in the Chief Research Officer grade mean that job changes among a very few individuals can have a disproportionate effect on the data. In addition, 70 per cent of those in SPRO posts (the next grade down from Chief Research Officer) are women, a proportion equal to that found among Research Officers, although here too the data are based on a small number of individuals.

It is worth noting that this pattern of women being relatively well represented at the top of the government social research sector is not replicated among the science grades (neither is it evident among economists — 4.1.2 below). In science women account for just nine per cent of Senior Scientific Officers compared with 35 per cent of Assistant Scientific Officers (Committee on Women in Science, Engineering and Technology, 1994).

Of particular interest is the comparison between government social research and the academic sector, where women comprise a much smaller proportion of very senior researchers. As noted in Chapter 2, women account for less than 20 per cent of teaching and research staff at professorial level in administrative, business and social studies cost centres, and an even smaller proportion of research-only staff at this level (see Figure 2.3).

Although women are well represented in government social research, there is an issue about the status accorded to it within the Civil Service. Relative to the economic service and to the fast

Figure 4.2: Government social researchers by gender and department 1994



* Includes Statisticians

Source: Data supplied by the Employment Department

stream administrative track of the Civil Service, social research is often perceived as having a lower status. This is reflected in the limited grade progression available to social researchers. There are no social research posts in the top three grades of the Civil Service hierarchy (Grades 1 to 3). If researchers wish to progress into these grades they have to switch into either the policy or the administration side of the Civil Service. Economists, on the other hand, are able to progress into the top three grades.

Social researchers by department

Turning now to the gender breakdown of social researchers by department, Figure 4.2 shows that OPCS (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys) has the highest number of social researchers and Health the lowest.

Women are particularly well represented in Health (although the total number of researchers here is only seven, six of which, or 86 per cent, are women), OPCS (72 per cent), and Social Security (67 per cent). They are less well represented in Environment[1] (45 per cent) and the Home Office (44 per cent).

4.1.3 Government Economic Service

The situation in the government economic service (GES) differs to that in social research. Women account for just a fifth of the total GES and less than ten per cent of those in the most senior

[1] Although, as noted above, the figures for the DoE exclude a number of social scientists working in the planning and resources section of the department.

grades (Grade 5 and above). The number of women in the GES has been increasing in recent years (they represented 13.5 per cent of the total in 1984). In addition, a higher proportion of new entrants to the GES are women — they accounted for one-third of Assistant Economists in 1994, a figure which is in line with women's share of the total population of new economics graduates (data supplied by the Treasury).

4.2 Other social research activities

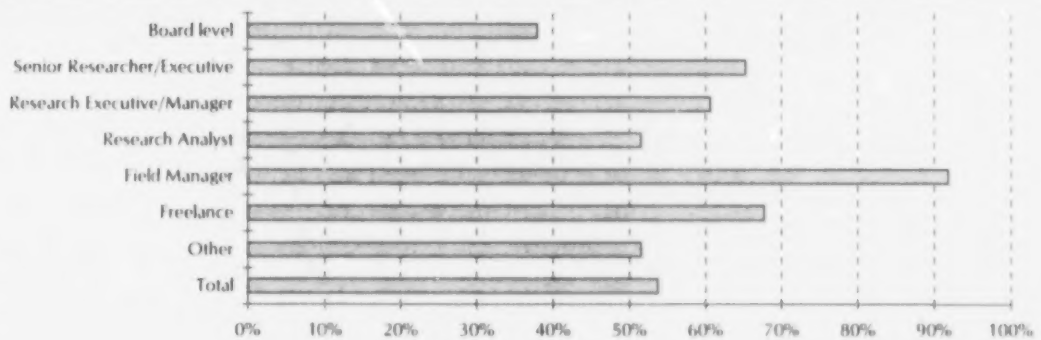
We have obtained information on the gender profile of two other social research organisations: the Market Research Society and the Social Research Association.

4.2.1 Market Research Society

Women account for over a half of members of the Market Research Society (MRS). A 1994 survey of the membership showed that they are well represented in most of the major types of jobs in the industry, the main exception being board level jobs, in which they account for a relatively low 38 per cent of the total (Figure 4.3). Nevertheless, their representation at this level is significantly higher than among professors in academia.

It is also worth noting that at the next most senior level, Senior Researcher/Executive, two thirds of members are women. They are, therefore, progressing up the hierarchy. Part of this pattern may be due to the effects of women's more recent entry into market research — women members of the MRS have spent fewer years in market research than their male counterparts, with 54 per cent having nine years or less experience in the industry compared to 42 per cent of men and 19 per cent of men having 25 years experience compared to six per cent of women. Consistent with this is women's younger age profile, with 54 per cent of women being under 35 years of age compared to 38 per cent of men (Marketing and Research Services Ltd, 1994).

Figure 4.3: Women as a proportion of Market Research Society members by job title



Source: Market Research Society 1994 Survey of Members (n=703 women and 604 men)

Table 4.1: Members of the Social Research Association by type of organisation and gender 1995 (% distribution)

	Women	Men	Total (%)	Total (no.)
Higher and further education	27.7	28.8	28.2	178
Independent institute	9.6	8.9	9.3	59
Central government	14.7	10.1	12.8	81
Market research/other plc	13.6	17.5	15.2	96
Local government	6.9	7.4	7.1	45
Health	4.0	0.8	2.7	17
Charity	5.9	5.8	5.9	37
Self-employed	2.7	3.9	3.2	20
Quangos	2.4	3.1	2.7	17
Other organisations	3.7	2.7	3.3	21
Other members	8.8	10.9	9.7	61
Total (=100%)	*375*	*257*	*632*	*632*

Source: Social Research Association Directory of Members

4.2.2 Social Research Association

The Social Research Association (SRA) encompasses a range of sectors and can therefore shed light on the employment of researchers across more than one type of activity. In 1995, 59 per cent of members of the SRA were women (the SRA has 636 members, 378 of whom are women). The three sectors which form the focus of this study — higher education, independent institutes and central government — account for a half of SRA members, with local government and market research/other plcs making up the bulk of the remainder (seven per cent and 15 per cent respectively) (Table 4.1).

The SRA also records the occupations of its members (Table 4.2). These data are difficult to interpret due to the different occupational categories used in the various sectors members work in. We have sought to deal with this by grouping together occupations relevant to academia and research institutes (professor to research fellow/assistant), those mainly relevant to market research type activities (research director to research executive), research officer posts (PRO and SRO), which are dominated by government organisations and the charity sector, and others. The data confirm indications from elsewhere that in more senior jobs men tend to account for a disproportionate share of the total. It is also the case, however, that among academic members of the SRA, men account for a particularly large proportion of senior posts. In addition, in the research officer posts women are more equally represented at the top level (PRO) than is the case elsewhere.

Table 4.2: Women and men in the SRA by occupation 1995

	Women as % total	Men as % total	Total (no.)
Professor	36.0	64.0	25
Principal/senior lecturer	33.3	66.7	33
Lecturer	50.0	50.0	18
Senior research fellow	45.0	55.0	20
Research fellow/assistant	71.9	28.1	121
Research director/Associate director	47.9	52.1	94
Senior research executive	81.8	18.2	11
Research executive	71.4	28.6	28
Principal research officer (PRO)	66.7	33.3	33
Senior research officer (SRO)	74.5	25.5	47
Consultants	53.6	46.4	28
Other	55.7	44.3	79
Total	*59.4*	*40.6*	*636*

Source: SRA Directory of Members

A survey of SRA members in 1993 asked women if they felt that their gender had hampered their work opportunities. While the majority did not feel their careers had been hampered, 39 per cent thought this had been the case, mainly due to being given fewer promotion opportunities. In addition, 45 per cent indicated that their opportunities had been hampered by being married or in a long-term relationship — most commonly due to having children or domestic responsibilities (62 per cent of the relevant group). As one respondent indicated:

> *If you go on maternity leave and wish to job share there is often little prospect for higher grade researchers. You usually have to go down to a research assistant level and work part time which is very frustrating.* (Mitchell, 1994)

An additional 28 per cent of those indicating that their career had been affected by being married or in a long-term relationship indicated that mobility was a key factor, in particular the tendency for them to move because of changes in their partner's job location which resulted in some women accepting lower paid or less satisfying work (Mitchell, 1994).

4.3 Summary

This chapter has focused on women social scientists in the government sector, the Market Research Society (MRS) and the Social Research Association (SRA). The main findings to emerge from the analysis include:

- Women are better represented in the higher grades of government social research than in either academia or the

research centres/institutes. They account for over a half of Chief Research Officers, compared to less than a fifth of social scientists both at professorial level in the university sector, and in Level 1 positions in the research centres and IRIs.

- The situation is very different in the Government Economic Service, where women are much less well represented overall (accounting for a fifth of the total) and in senior grades (less than ten per cent).
- In the MRS and SRA the basic pattern identified for the other sectors holds, and women tend to be less well represented in more senior positions than they are in the rest of the hierarchy.

5. Equal Opportunities in Research Careers

The previous chapters have assessed the situation of women in social science research, focusing on their representation in academia, government, and independent institutes. This chapter builds on this background to examine some of the reasons for the patterns identified above. In particular it focuses on the factors influencing success in research careers and investigates the extent to which there is a gender dimension to these factors. We recognise that it is problematic to discuss women and men as separate, internally undifferentiated groups, and have therefore chosen to identify factors likely to have a gendered aspect rather than focus on differences between women and men. Having said this, however, the previous chapters have highlighted some very consistent patterns. While the experiences of some women and some men may be similar, and those of different groups of women very dissimilar, this consistency of outcome does indicate the existence of factors which affect women and men in different ways.

The chapter is based primarily on interviews with 24 women social scientists in academia, government and independent institutes. Given that the focus is on explaining patterns in the data, however, discussion of the interviews is prefaced by a brief review of the literature on women in research. Academics to date have primarily concentrated on women lecturing staff, and there is relatively little on women researchers in either academia, government or the independent institutes (although the experience of women in the Civil Service generally has been more extensively covered). As a result, the review of the literature below focuses on this group. The issues raised by their career experiences, however, are in many cases broadly applicable both to the wider research community and to women's career progression in a range of professional and managerial occupations.

In contrast to the rest of the report, this chapter does not look at the different sectors in separate sections. This is because, while some variations do need highlighting, the experiences of the women we interviewed were more similar than different across sectors. Additionally, many interviewees had worked in more than one sector. We have therefore chosen to discuss a series of general issues, and where relevant identify sectoral differences.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first looks at the literature on women's careers, focusing on social science and academia. This provides the context for the second section, where we discuss the findings from our interviews with social science researchers.

5.1 Careers and gender

As is the case in many other professions, women are entering social science research careers in increasing numbers. There is also evidence to suggest that they are succeeding in their careers and progressing up organisational hierarchies. The extent to which they are adequately represented in more senior positions is, however, more questionable. They are not yet present in the upper echelons of organisations in the proportion that would be expected, given their representation overall.

A common explanation for this pattern is that women have not been in their careers long enough to reach the top. We were unable to test this proposition thoroughly in our research due to a lack of longitudinal data on the careers of women and men. Evidence from other studies, however, shows that women tend to progress more slowly in their careers than men and do not reach as senior positions. For example, a cohort study of entrants to the Civil Service fast stream between 1978 and 1991 found that women and men progressed at similar rates to reach Grade 7 (the first management grade), taking on average five to six years. In the higher grades a different pattern emerges. Of those reaching Grade 7 by 1985 and still in service in 1991, 34 per cent of the men and only 16 per cent of the women had reached Grade 5 (Committee on Women in Science, Engineering and Technology, 1994, p.19).[1] A study of Australian academics resulted in similar findings, with significantly fewer women than men advancing to a senior lectureship within six years of gaining a lectureship (reported in Romanin and Over, 1993; see also Rausch *et al.* 1989; Toren, 1993).[2]

If women progress more slowly than men, they are less likely to reach the top of their profession, even if they have been well represented in it for several decades. In teaching, for example, women have dominated employment for many decades and currently account for 65 per cent of all full-time teachers. They are, however, less well represented at the top of the profession:

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[1] The report notes that the sample numbers in this study were small and the analysis not conclusive.

[2] In the UK data from the mid-1980s show that of the 536 people promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer or reader only ten per cent were women. This is substantially lower than their overall representation in academic posts at the time (just under 20 per cent) (Aziz, 1990).

45 per cent of head teachers and 56 per cent of deputy heads are women (Court *et al.*, 1995).

A number of factors have been identified in the literature on women's and men's careers which may contribute to their lack of representation at the top of organisations. The amount of information on these issues is vast. We have therefore limited the analysis below primarily to studies of academia. The issues are, however, similar across many higher status occupations.

5.1.1 Career development

A key factor affecting career success is the extent to which individuals are encouraged to develop the required skills and subsequently to apply for promotion. While many organisations outside of academia have formal processes for ensuring that all employees are encouraged to develop their full potential, this is not always the case in academia. In higher education there appears to be greater reliance on informal mentoring and patronage relations. Heward *et al.* (1995) argue that senior individuals in the academic profession are a key influence on more junior members' career progression. It may be that the propensity to act as a mentor or patron is a decision which is influenced by the gender of the potential mentee. If this is the case, different groups are likely to experience different rates of career progression.

The influence of 'gatekeepers' (Heward *et al.*, 1995), may help explain why a higher proportion of male PhD social scientists enter university teaching careers than is the case among women. Data on the careers of postgraduate social scientists show that of those gaining a PhD in the late 1970s or early 1980s, by 1987 41 per cent of men and 32 per cent of women had entered university teaching posts. The reverse was true in research, with 17 per cent of women being employed in research compared to 11 per cent of men (Rudd, 1989).

For contract researchers a second key issue is the lack of career development prospects. Career structures are geared toward getting a teaching post, with limited opportunities to progress up the academic hierarchy being available to those remaining as researchers (Bryson and Tulle-Winton, 1994). Contract researchers may also find it difficult to gain recognition for their work in the form of co-authorship of publications based upon it, invitations to conferences *etc.* (*ibid.*; Wells, 1992; Barlow *et al.*, 1993).

5.1.2 Unequal sharing of domestic responsibilities

As long as children remain the prime responsibility of mothers rather than fathers, women are more likely than men to find their careers disrupted by children. A study of Australian academics found that while 41 per cent of women in the study

had been out of the paid workforce for a year or more as a consequence of parenthood, among men this proportion fell to three per cent (Romanin and Over, 1993). The impact of family commitments was also of greater concern to women in the study than men, with women more likely to indicate that such commitments had limited:

- their attendance at conferences
- the time spent in the library
- time committed to research
- their rate of publication
- their career progress
- the possibility of moving elsewhere to take a job

(Romanin and Over, 1993).

The *Rising Tide* report summed up the situation as follows:

> *'The combination of work and family responsibilities can pose problems for either parent, but because it has been usual for women to take the main responsibility for child-rearing it impacts most severely upon them. Furthermore, the most common child-rearing period, when parents are aged between 25 and 35, often coincides with the time of key development of a science or engineering career. If young women can continue in employment at this stage of their career it will enable them to realise their full potential and provide the opportunity to progress to senior positions ... '* (Committee on Women in Science, Engineering and Technology, 1994, p. 38).

While one solution to the differential impact of domestic responsibilities on women and men would be for men to share more equally in them, the role of institutions in creating problems for all staff seeking to combine work and family life cannot be ignored. The lack of part-time permanent posts and a tendency to schedule meetings and seminars in the early morning, late afternoon or evening are just two instances of institutional practices which assume that staff are not bound by domestic commitments (Acker, 1992).

5.1.3 Geographical mobility

Another factor with a clear gender dimension which has been identified as differentially affecting the career progression of women and men academics is geographic mobility (Romanin and Over, 1993; Rosenfeld and Jones, 1987). Women in relationships often move to further their partner's career but the reverse is more seldom the case. The disadvantages of moving include having to take a lower level job as a consequence of following a spouse or being unable to accept a good position in a location removed from the partner's employment. A study of Australian academics, for example, found that 18 per cent of female academics had followed their partner to another city

compared to just four per cent of male academics. Male academics were also more likely than female academics to report that their partner had followed them to another city (Romanin and Over, 1993, p. 421).

Given this situation, it is perhaps no wonder that many women academics choose not to have a conventional family life involving partners and children (Bagilhole, 1993). As one woman put it:

> *'I haven't had a normal woman's life, because I'm an academic. This has involved a lot of moving around and this has broken up relationships, because men won't pack up and come with you.'* (from: Bagilhole, 1993)

5.1.4 Networks

Access to informal professional networks and contacts can contribute to career progression both in academia and elsewhere. While women are increasingly forming their own networks, there is evidence to suggest that they are still less likely than men to have access to these important avenues of advancement (Bagilhole, 1993a; Bagilhole, 1993b; Morley, 1994). Networks are seen as beneficial, both in terms of the support and encouragement participants receive, and the advantages of being better placed for promotion opportunities and gaining research experience (Heward and Taylor, 1992; Bagilhole, 1993b; Morley, 1994). This in turn, of course, helps individuals to gain the confidence they need to succeed in academia and which women are often perceived as lacking (although the reasons for this are seldom elaborated).[1]

5.1.5 Institutional norms and values

A number of studies have highlighted the impact of institutional norms and values in influencing career success. One study suggests that although higher education does not overtly discriminate against women, it nevertheless makes it harder for them to succeed through 'an acceptance of particular values and beliefs' which marginalise them (Thomas, cited in Aziz, 1990). These are difficult to pin down but many revolve around assumptions about what an academic ought to be, and the kinds of topics it is legitimate to study (Scott and Porter, 1983; Morley, 1994; Acker, 1992; Bagilhole, 1993a and 1993b; McAuley, 1987; Luke and Gore, 1992). Women frequently report that they are made to feel that they do not belong in academia, that they have to be better than their male colleagues in order to succeed, or that certain topics are not valued as highly as others as appropriate subjects for academic debate (with feminism and

[1] See Morley 1994 for a discussion of the impact of discrimination on women's sense of self worth in academia.

women's issues generally being less well regarded in this respect) (*eg* Bagilhole, 1993b; Morley, 1994; Luke and Gore, 1992). Women also have reported issues around visibility, with one of the clearest examples being the oft-cited instance of their points being ignored during meetings, whereas if the same point is made by a man it is immediately taken up (Bagilhole, 1993b).

Another issue is the relative importance women and men tend to accord to activities not related to teaching or research. There is a greater tendency for women to take on the pastoral care of students and routine administration, spending time on these activities which many of their male colleagues use for research. These activities are not generally as highly valued as teaching and research and are therefore not accorded as great a priority in assessing candidates' suitability for promotion (Bagilhole, 1993b; Acker, 1992; Morley, 1994; Jackson, 1990).

5.1.6 Hostility and overt discrimination

A final factor influencing women's career progression is overt hostility and discrimination (Morley, 1994). This is perhaps less acceptable as was once the case, but as late as 1991 the CVCP recognised that discriminatory practices exist in universities (Bagilhole, 1993b). Hostility may not need to be directed specifically at women in order to have an effect. The general cultural environment of academia which accepts hostility as an appropriate way of testing individuals is likely to be gendered in its effect, with women being less used to coping in a hostile culture and therefore less experienced at deflecting criticism. Even if fully capable of operating in such an environment, there may be an issue about the extent to which women feel willing to do so (see McAuley, 1987).

5.2 Interviews with women social science researchers

We conducted 24 interviews with women social science researchers, eight of which were telephone interviews and the rest being face-to-face. A half of the interviewees were from the university sector, six were from IRIs and the remainder were government researchers or economists. The main disciplinary backgrounds of the interviewees were sociology/social policy, economics, geography and psychology.

The interviews covered the following topics:

- career history
- factors contributing to career success
- barriers to career progression
- views on equal opportunities in research careers.

The findings on each of these issues are discussed below.

5.2.1 Career histories

A striking feature of interviewees' careers was that only in a minority of cases had they been planned. Many women had not originally intended to enter a research career at all, and had found themselves in a research post either through a contact or a post becoming open at a time when they were looking for work.

One researcher, for example, had originally planned a career as a social worker. She decided while at university that social work was not what she wanted to do but her course demanded that she do a placement. She therefore found a placement doing research for a lecturer and discovered that she had developed an interest in research. After taking a higher degree and working outside research for a while, she decided to look for a post in policy related research. Her subsequent career has been entirely in research.

This lack of visibility of research careers means that contacts within one of the research sectors are an important source of knowledge about posts. In more recent years, positions have generally been advertised, but the influence of 'gatekeepers' can still be felt in their role in encouraging individuals to apply for a specific job or, more passively, letting them know that a post is available.

Other interviewees were not aware that research careers existed as such, and only became aware of the opportunities having been pushed towards research jobs by tutors. As one interviewee put it: 'I had no idea that such jobs existed, I only got into research through tutors showing me adverts and encouraging me to apply'.

One of the IRI researchers we spoke to stressed that she had 'stumbled into research' as a result of a summer job with a lecturer. This lecturer then asked her to continue working with her when she took up a post abroad with a major international organisation. Having completed three years in this post she then decided to continue with a research career, a decision she was able to pursue partly because of her international experience.

A final factor in this area is that of confidence. One interviewee described it as: 'although I got very good grades and was particularly keen I never received the same support and encouragement as my male peers and I certainly wasn't invited to stay on to do a PhD as some of them were'.

Another interviewee who met her partner on an MSc course said of the course: 'the department was far more encouraging to men than to women, although we both did very well on the course, he was encouraged to continue with a PhD whereas I was not'.

Interviewees' subsequent careers fell into two main categories. First, there were those whose career had been relatively straight-

forward, either in terms of the number of sectors they had worked in or their career path being fairly linear, though not necessarily consistently upward, in character. This was most characteristic of those who early on in their careers found themselves in an organisation with a defined career structure. In the government sector, for example, the women we interviewed had generally entered as a researcher soon after leaving university and had developed their career within the Civil Service. As one woman said: 'I started off in a three-month temporary post and stayed for 31 years'.

The second type of career involved much more movement between sectors and jobs, and was generally associated with the early career being in contract research or posts with no defined career structure. Many of the women involved had subsequently succeeded in moving to an organisation which did offer a structured career, but the process had not been straightforward.

These patterns suggest that while many women do not start their working lives wanting to be a researcher, once in research they do seek out organisations or sectors which offer some opportunity for a structured career. Women researchers do therefore have a marked career orientation, although they may differ from men in terms of what they want from a career, and the extent to which they are encouraged (or enabled) to be highly focused about career progression. That is, our evidence suggest that women do not choose to go aimlessly from one research post to another, and that given the opportunity they will seek out a more structured career. The lack of information about research career opportunities, however, means that individuals' circumstances, contacts, and 'luck' play a key role in determining the ease with which entry into a post associated with a structured career is achieved.

Women may also tend to undervalue their skills, and in the early stages of their career accept jobs which do not necessarily lead to advancement. Many women we spoke to indicated that they had not had a career strategy planned out when they began working, but had developed one later as they became more confident:

> *'I didn't expect much of myself. It was only when I became more experienced that I started looking round and wanting more. I realised I wanted a bigger job.'*

> *'At xxxx I got sidelined into thinking I had to claw my way up rather than going for the top jobs.'*

5.2.2 Career success: the cultural dimension

Despite the different backgrounds and working experiences of the women we interviewed, there were a number of consistent messages regarding the factors contributing to a successful career in research. By and large, excellent technical skills and knowledge of the subject were assumed. In academia, the need

to publish and go to the right conferences were also widely recognised as crucial. The key issue for the women we interviewed was not the actual work involved, but how it is 'marketed' to one's peers. This involves two kinds of issues:

- knowing what to do and what is considered important
- the mechanisms through which this knowledge is transmitted — the importance of mentors and networks.

Each of these is discussed below.

Knowing what to do

Developing a reputation for high quality work was not perceived by the interviewees to be an obvious or simple process, with knowledge on how to 'play the game', achieve visibility, gain academic standing, and, above all, be taken seriously, all playing a major role in career success. Most of the women we interviewed identified a gender dimension to these factors.

Although it was not quite clear how or why this occurred, several women emphasised that they had felt at a disadvantage relative to their male colleagues in terms of the more subtle factors contributing to career success.

One academic stressed the importance of understanding the culture of universities and knowing the rules of the game:

> *'The assumption tends to be that you're either a secretary or a postgraduate student. You're taken more seriously if you wear a suit. You have to learn how to play the game. Men don't have to deconstruct the culture and learn how to work their way through it. You have to learn the culture itself. You have to know what to do to get on. Men are not taken for secretaries. They have less hurdles to get over to prove themselves. There is a credibility issue for women. Small things all the time make you realise you're in a minority.'*

> *'The first piece of advice my new manager gave me when I was promoted was to buy some suits to look as much as possible as a man.'*

For a highly successful former Civil Servant the key issue was being taken seriously:

> *'A key issue is demonstrating that it is a serious part of your life. You have to convince men in the hierarchy that it is not a hobby. It's not done by working hard. You need to do more subtle things as well. Give off other signals. I decided to wear serious clothing and got taken more seriously. It was very strange.'*

> *'If I was a man there is no way I would be in the position I'm currently in — I'd be in a chair somewhere. Partly because I would have had to take myself more seriously, partly because others would have had to take me more seriously.'*

An interesting insight from a lecturer related to student expectations:

> *'In this job the students take you differently being a woman: it takes a while to establish yourself. Students expect an older male lecturer and tend to take them far more seriously.'*

A number of women also emphasised the importance of visibility and a high profile:

> *'Women tend to have a slightly lower profile. Men may take more risks. Men are more easily identified as bright young things, but this doesn't happen so much for women. Men are more vocal and not so hesitant about putting their own views across. This is admired. They are more combative. I wish I hadn't been as shy as I was. I was quiet. I may have moved faster if I hadn't been. I encourage women in my classes to talk now — identify second and third year women who are good but quiet.'*

> *'It's important to be visible. Don't be apologetic in your delivery. How do you get noticed? You need to become more aggressive in style. Women need to bullshit more. Even if they're not in possession of all the facts they need to say something. Men do. How you say things is important. Clothes are very important for credibility.'*

One of the ways in which men are perceived to have an advantage over women is their ability or willingness to focus intensively on their developing their own careers. Many of the women we spoke to regarded men as more single-minded in this respect.

For academics this became clear in discussions on the relative priority accorded to certain tasks by women and men:

> *'Women have to guard against too much administration and pastoral work. Students come to you with problems. If you try to tackle them all it's to your own cost. It's hard to turn people away.'*

> *'I am too willing to take on the things that other people say no to — it's typical of a woman, I'm not ruthless enough — I tend to see other people's point of view. If that means a couple less papers I can live with that.'*

> *'On a number of occasions I've been given "soft" jobs — for example field trips, extra tutees or a course leader role because I'm "sensitive".'*

The advantages of prioritising career prospects over other issues was reflected in a key piece of advice one interviewee would give to researchers beginning their career: 'don't drift'.

> *'Women are grateful for things which aren't necessarily very good. Sometimes women move to be with their partners and apply for things below their former job. Men don't use that strategy and will stay in their old job or hold out for something better. If you drift it affects your subsequent career progress: it's a step backwards, it sends negative signals about you. Employers want people who want to progress. Women don't necessarily realise what signals their application sends.'*

The ability to be single-minded and prioritise career prospects over other issues is of course influenced by the relative importance given to women's and men's careers in dual career households. This key issue is addressed in more depth below (section 5.2.3).

The importance of mentors and networks

Mentoring relations and becoming integrated into formal and informal networks were seen by interviewees as a key mechanism whereby knowledge about what to do to succeed in a research career is transmitted.

> *'I have got where I am because I've worked for women and they have exposed the network for me. People have guided my way through the inside politics and the implications of doing things one way or another. The biggest factor in my career progress has been people pushing me — "you need to do this, go to this conference, this is what you need to achieve". After that, determination and long hours and wanting to stay in academia.'*

> *'The department was very male dominated at that time, there was one female member of staff who was patronised by male colleagues and patted on the head . . . This changed a great deal with the arrival of xxxx who made a big improvement in the department. Just because she was more visible, that in itself was very encouraging, in addition she did things such as organise and run reading groups which really helped to support individuals — you had a sense of her really being there and supporting you.'*

> *'The people who've shown me the way have all been women.'*

> *'The most positive influence on my career has been working with women, they have provided the support and advice that the organisation has often failed to provide. In particular, the increasing number of women in senior management posts is slowly but surely changing the organisational culture.'*

Some women suggested that it had been easier for their male colleagues to become embedded in their profession than it is for women:

> *'Men train each other. Women and men pass on different messages. Men suss out the power structures. Women socialise with each other.'*

5.2.3 Barriers to success

Section 5.2.2 focused on the cultural and organisational factors contributing to career success and the way in which gender is implicated in them. Evidently, if women do not have access to relevant networks or mentors, or do not know how to raise their profile, these cultural factors become barriers to career progression. There were, however, a number of more overt barriers which the women we interviewed identified as constituting a major impediment to their ability to further their careers. Key among these are:

- the difficulty combining work and family life
- the lack of role models
- overt hostility.

Work and family life

The difficulties in managing a family life and a career came up repeatedly as a major inhibitor of women's research careers. Almost all interviewees made some reference to the way in which parental responsibilities will impact more on a woman's career than on a man's.

> *'There is a clear distinction between women with children and others. I don't feel that having maternity leave has held me back but it is putting a block on where I can get to. I feel that my career is on hold until my child goes to school. Men who had children at the same time haven't had their careers affected in the same way — they have wives at home so it doesn't stop them working late at night.'*

And in advice to women starting out on a research career:

> *'Don't have children too soon. Try to stay in full-time work as long as possible, use your twenties to build up your career and don't have children until your thirties.'*

> *'Women must consider that a baby at 26 versus a baby at 32 seriously weakens their market edge.'*

> *'Until I have a PhD and the temporary contract is over, there is no way I can have children. I have to have tenure before I have children. There are many women academics in permanent posts who don't have children. Very few of my peers have children or contemplate it or they have put it off. In the public sector it would have been easier — there's flexitime, the holiday entitlement is explicit, part-time contracts are available. Academics would do full-time work for a part-time salary — the thickness of your CV is the key.'*

> *'If you had children it would inevitably slow you down, you can't write as much, produce as much — but I'd still try and produce. We don't now lead a lifestyle conducive to children. It would slow you down. Some do work part time and have children. But even if you were part-time in academia you would end up working full time. It's frightening how people with children rush around. I don't really want to lead that sort of life. Part time would certainly slow you down in the academic system — you're profile is so important. The climate is a difficult one for having children.'*

Many of the difficulties of managing a career and having children were seen to be compounded by institutional norms. Much was said here of the expectation of organisations that women will take the majority of the responsibility for domestic affairs and the subsequent impact that this has on careers. The examples included a forced move from a prestigious position to what was seen as an easier job, as her manager assumed she would be unable to cope with a demanding job given her new caring responsibilities:

'Just because men do not have babies and do not face the same re-entry problems they seem to have the advantage.'

Other examples were given of unsatisfactory arrangements on return from maternity leave. One researcher went back part time on a new home working initiative, but found that she was fighting against a culture of 'if you're not in the office you're not working' — people would apologise for phoning her at home on days when she was working. In addition, her manager lacked a real commitment to the arrangement and her position was undermined, especially so by her manager allocating her work to other people, which seemed to imply she was unproductive. Another researcher (whose part-time hours were over 90 per cent of a normal working week) said:

'The organisation isn't very keen on people coming back part time. In my case they were prepared to make a temporary arrangement for a year. It's due for review, but no one has said anything . . . I'm just keeping quiet about it . . . the nursery isn't open any longer hours so there's not a lot I can do about it.'

There was a strong feeling that regardless of individual abilities or domestic arrangements, women would inevitably be held up in their career once they had children, due largely to institutional prejudices:

'Organisations need to behave in a more family friendly way, to start treating men as if they have families as well. Men are not supported in organisations to show domestic responsibility, that can only come from the top down.'

And as one university based researcher pointed out:

'I feel that there is an even greater sexism in force here, because if there is one job that allows you to bring up children it's university lecturing.'

Role models

Much was made of the importance of role models for women. Several interviewees commented on how role models had influenced them:

'I can't stress enough the importance of role models for me, you can see that they can do it.'

'Two women managers have been crucial to my career, they have provided an insight into the organisational culture and have taught me how to survive and succeed within it.'

Overt hostility

A minority of women identified instances of overt hostility.

'I was part of a Women's Group which didn't go down too well. We wanted to talk about the working environment and so set up a group.

The group wanted to survey women staff about their experiences. That went down dreadfully. The Director tried to stop the research, he said it was a waste of time. The group was not very successful but it did raise issues. It was seen as an irritant — rocking the boat.'

Others felt that they were not allowed to play by the same rules as men because of the hostility that aroused:

'If you take the model of the non-threatening mousy woman who sits in the background and doesn't say much, you don't get promoted, so it's a difficult balance. When men are assertive it's not commented on; when women are assertive it provokes more hostility.'

Inevitably, some of the women interviewed had experienced harassment at work which had a significant effect on their career path. One civil service researcher described how she had made a lateral move, disadvantageous to her career, to get away from her direct boss who was the problem. Subsequently, when her career brought her back into a subordinate role with him she received an 'unfitted' promotion marking (in the annual appraisal system). It is the only 'unfitted' marking she has received in her career and feels it was a direct result of her rejecting his advances. This was particularly damaging as such an assessment marking can end your career in the Civil Service. Although the researcher in question would feel far more confident about dealing with that sort of thing now, this occurred in the early eighties, so although she discussed the situation with friends she was warned of the dangers of talking to personnel or staff welfare about harassment. She did not challenge the appraisal marking as she did not feel confident about taking on the establishment. Another researcher talked of:

'having a very bad and very sexist manager.'

This affected her to some extent, particularly her work motivation. Although equal opportunities issues were being raised and discussed in the department at the time, she did not feel able to challenge this blatant sexist behaviour as she was very young and in a junior position and he was very powerful. Instead she felt that she had to learn to live with it, and took support from others' positive feedback and the general recognition of this man's reputation for being a bad manager.

A slightly different form of harassment was described by another researcher who, as a very junior researcher along with two male colleagues, published a paper on data being collected as part of a large research project:

'The professor (who was not a part of the publication) never forgave me, I was banned from teaching, banned from working with either of the co-authors and basically harassed to the point where ... eventually I left.'

Neither of the two male co-authors received such harsh treatment, and the researcher was subsequently refused access to the data she had collected, she concludes:

> *'There's no way this could have happened to me if I'd been a man.'*

It is interesting to note that the only researchers who reported instances of blatant and overtly sexist behaviour tended to be more experienced, and felt that at the time there weren't the policies around to help them combat their unfair treatment. Whereas now, they would feel not only more confident about tackling sexism in the workplace, but also that the policies are in place to support that. The role of equal opportunities policies in changing behaviour in the work place is described below.

5.2.4 Equal opportunities

Women who started a career in research before the 'age of equal opportunities', had no doubts that the introduction of equal opportunities policies and practices, and more generally the 'visibility' of equal opportunities issues, has led to many positive changes. As one respondent explained:

> *'Because of the department's formal commitment to EO and the need to set an example, senior managers are now much more aware of EO issues and this has created a very 'helpful culture'. For example, in my office, meetings are never arranged before 9 and after 5, and I can say that I have to leave at a certain time because I've to pick up my children. A similar recognition of one's family responsibilities would have been unthinkable ten years ago.'*

Many of the respondents who worked in the Civil Service felt that while much remains to be done, EO policy and practice have changed dramatically in the last few years, and the growing proportion of women at senior as well as more junior levels has been crucial in ensuring that EO remains high on the agenda. While there were variations between different departments, and between regional offices and head office, flexible working arrangements, part-time and even home working are (slowly) becoming more 'acceptable'. Flexible working arrangements seem to be available mainly in lower level positions, but there were examples of women in senior posts being allowed to work part time.

These experiences suggest that while none of the sectors can be said to have achieved equality of opportunity, a firm policy guided by top level commitment and adequate resources can help to change attitudes. This can ensure that more women gain access to the practical help which enables them to continue working as a researcher, while retaining responsibility for children or other dependants.

Having said that, however, interviewees' experiences of, and thoughts about, equal opportunities covered quite a broad range

of issues. Although equal opportunities policies are very visible in some contexts, they do not always have the desired effect:

> *'The university is attempting to make changes; they have created an equal opportunities post on campus to which they have appointed a woman, but the post is a bit out on its own ... she needs more institutional assistance, although she is trying to do things to improve the situation.'*

One interviewee described how despite the existence of an equal opportunities committee, the impact of equal opportunities policies across the university varied greatly. In one faculty a Head of Department was the equal opportunities representative, whereas in another faculty it was a junior fixed-term contract researcher:

> *'If this type of approach is to be successful it has to be taken seriously and the liaison role fulfilled by someone who knows the university structures and power relationships.'*

Others felt a more direct benefit from the application of equal opportunities practices:

> *'I have been the token woman, but I think that I've benefited from that, for example through being on interview committees. The more committees and things you get on to, it gives you greater access to managerial levels and policy making.'*

Some interviewees suggested that it wasn't so much about equal opportunities for women as about fair practices regardless of gender:

> *'I don't like talking about supporting women, but about the family — work interaction for both sexes.'*

> *'I would like to see organisations helping men to take more responsibility for their family.'*

Others highlighted the importance of structures and guidelines for ensuring fairness in the workplace:

> *'The more that appraisal and recruitment are formalised, the greater the benefit for women, as it lessens the likelihood of prejudicial decisions.'*

It is not enough merely to have policies that promote equal opportunities, although the existence of the policies themselves is important, they must be seen to be applied and linked into policy and decision making at the highest levels.

5.2.5 Defining success in women's terms

EO policies on the whole aim to allow women the same success as men, but an important point emerging from the interviews was whether success for women was the same as for men and to

challenge the assumption that women wanted success on men's terms:

> *'The careers of many men and women are very different. My advice to young women would be: don't want work and family life on the same terms as men because that way lies disappointment. My generation should have done more in saying we want success on our own terms, not on men's. What does women's success look like? — not men's. We need to start challenging that.'*

Another researcher, currently a university lecturer, when asked about inhibitors to her career replied with reference to being given additional 'soft' duties (such as extra tutees):

> *'Inhibitors, yes there have been quite a few, but not in a way that I regret at all. I'm happier with the person I am to do those things . . . If that means a couple less papers I can live with that.'*

Some interviewees, having started on a research career path, now expressed doubts about how it would continue, given that the usual career structure did not tie in with their ambitions:

> *'Looking at future career, I don't know what it holds — I plan to carry on, but I don't like the way that the department (and wider academia) is organised. It's extremely petty about publications and very competitive, but I like research and can't see myself doing anything else. I don't see myself as a senior lecturer or a professor. Some men in the department are incredibly ambitious and you can see it in the way that they line themselves up for things. They churn out publications for the sake of it (because that's what you have to do) it's a stupid system that subsumes all else, I don't know that I want to be that kind of academic.'*

5.2.6 Status of researchers

One of the consistent themes in our interviews with those in the government sector and in academia, was the low status of researchers relative to other professionals. The status differential between contract researchers and lecturing staff was one of the main reasons why women in the university sector had sought to become lecturers:

> *'It's wearing raising your own money. You have more status as a lecturer — you're treated differently in the department. At xxx there are certain meetings you can't go to. Researchers don't get their names put in the phone book, so it's hard for people to track you down. I shared an office so I worked at home a lot. You don't get your own secretary unless the project buys one in. You get no support — you're on your own as a little artisan in a backwater. If I'd seen a research career path, my priorities about becoming a lecturer might have changed.'*

Likewise, in the Civil Service, social researchers (the situation is different for economists) can only reach a certain grade and have to transfer into the policy or administrative side if they wish to go further.

'If you want to be at the centre of influence don't be a researcher. If you want to go to the top, become an administrator. The chances for women in administration are good. But if you want an interesting job, a research career is more interesting. You do influence policy, but that is only part of the job. It's varied and intellectually stimulating and you can help change social problems.'

5.2.7 Summary

We found few instances of outright discriminatory practices and most of the women interviewed felt sufficiently confident to challenge these when they occurred. A number also mentioned that challenging unacceptable practices was facilitated by the existence of an equal opportunities policy and demonstrable commitment to enforcing it, along with clear guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

One clear reason for women's continued under-representation at the very top of career structures is difficulty in combining work and family life, a factor highlighted as an issue by women in each of the sectors. The *Rising Tide* report of women in science, engineering and technology also identified this as a key issue. The difficulty in balancing work and family has two clear dimensions. First, a research career makes considerable demands on individuals' time, with long and sometimes unpredictable hours being the norm. The women we interviewed were very aware that any unwillingness to adopt this norm made continued career progression difficult. The decision about when or if to have children was therefore crucial to their career prospects.

Second, women and their partners had to make decisions about the relative importance of their respective careers. This was particularly significant around the issue of mobility. Women were more likely either to move to be with partners (and thereby change jobs more often for non-strategic reasons as far as their career is concerned) or to stay in one area because of a partner's job and therefore be unwilling to move to take advantage of a job which would further their career.

Other barriers to career progression in social science research which the women we interviewed identified as being likely to have a gender dimension included:

- the need to demonstrate credibility and commitment (which was more likely to be assumed in their male colleagues)
- lack of visibility in their field and the difficulty of finding a senior individual to actively sponsor and promote their career
- the need to be very focused and strategic about a career and to both know about and adapt to 'the rules of the game'.

The development of more objective and clearer criteria for promotion was generally seen as positive for women. It gives

them a more defined set of goals and allows them to plan their career accordingly. It also gives them the scope to challenge promotion decisions if they feel they have adequately met the criteria and yet not been promoted. The main issue is the extent to which women are involved in defining the goals. Their under-representation among the upper levels of organisational hierarchies means that this is not necessarily the case. One area in which this clearly affects women is where promotion criteria demand a level of activity which conflicts with other responsibilities, in particular childcare.

6. Summary and Proposals

This chapter summarises the key findings of the study and outlines some proposals for further encouraging equal opportunities in social science research careers. Not all of the proposals relate to actions which could be taken by the ESRC but are included as illustrations of the kinds of policies which may help change the current situation.

Before going on to discuss our findings, an important qualifying point needs to be made. There is a marked absence of comprehensive and comparable data on women in the social science research community. Different data sources cover different kinds of disciplines and use different measures of career progression. It is therefore difficult to provide an overview of women's situation in social science research, and to compare their position in the three sectors upon which we have focused. In consequence, the findings discussed below are based on a range of sources and on an assessment of what they say about women's experiences. In the absence of a large survey of women and men social scientists which could provide comparative data, these findings must be recognised as provisional.

6.1 The availability of data: monitoring equality of opportunity

Available evidence shows that the social science research sector reflects patterns present in society more generally. Women are generally well represented among social science researchers, although this varies considerably by discipline, but they are disproportionately concentrated in the lower levels of the hierarchy. That is, as is the case in other professions, women are increasingly successful at entering social science research careers but they have yet to achieve equal representation at the top of the career structure. There is, however, variation between sectors and activities in this pattern, with government social research showing a relatively high proportion of women in top positions, and the university sector, the government economic service, and independent institutes relatively low ones.

Current sources of information make it very difficult to determine conclusively whether the under-representation of women at the top of the social science research community is due to their relatively recent entry to many areas or to other factors, such as institutional cultures, the difficulty of combining

work and family life, and discriminatory practices. Evidence from the literature on women in academia suggests that the latter play at least some role, a conclusion confirmed in some of our interviews. A longitudinal study following the careers of women and men would be ideal to resolve this issue. In the absence of such a survey there is still a great deal organisations could do to provide information which would facilitate such an assessment.

Of crucial importance here is the need to monitor equality of opportunity. There are a number of areas in which our understanding of the situation of women researchers, including women from other disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minority groups, could be improved via monitoring. The types of factors which could be monitored include:

- the profile of employment, including part-time and temporary work
- recruitment and selection, including recruitment literature, applications received, shortlisting, and the outcomes of interviews
- appraisal and promotion processes, including promotion success rates
- exits from organisations
- the availability and take up of part-time work and other family friendly working arrangements by grade
- research grant applications and the rate of success of different groups and different subject areas.

The Civil Service already collates information on many of these issues (with the exception, of course, of research grant applications). It has a high profile equal opportunities programme, during the operation of which women's representation in the higher level grades has increased, although equality remains some way off: women now account for ten per cent of those at Grade 3 and above (the top three grades), up from four per cent in 1984 (Cabinet Office, 1995). In the same period the *number* of women vice-chancellors of UK universities has only recently reached a total of six.

The ESRC could consider a role here by encouraging (indeed, requiring) its own Research Centres to collect relevant information, and by ensuring that the research funding process is monitored at each stage. In addition, the council could require holders of its research grants to demonstrate adequate monitoring activities, at a minimum where employment on a research grant is concerned.

6.2 Combining work and family life

The difficulty of combining work and family life remains one of the key factors contributing to women's labour market disadvantage. This is especially the case in research careers, which often require researchers to work long and/or unpredictable hours. In addition, some sectors penalise individuals who do not have a continuous employment history (and hence an up-to-date publications record and knowledge of recently developed techniques), offer little assistance to those on a career break, and do not have a history of making part-time work or job-sharing available at more senior levels. For contract researchers these problems are compounded by their lack of permanent employee status, making it difficult (if not impossible) for them to qualify for maternity leave, and the fact that their work frequently goes unrecognised.

The recent draft concordat on contract researchers (see Appendix 3) goes some way toward addressing the problems faced by both women and men contract researchers. It begins to address some of the issues around access to family friendly working arrangements that contribute to the difficulties women face combining career progression and caring responsibilities. Its implementation needs to be rigorously promoted by the ESRC.

More broadly, the development of a range of family friendly policies would facilitate the process of combining work and family life. Action needs to be taken in the following areas:

- provision for adequate paid maternity leave for all staff
- keeping in touch, and retraining programmes for those on career breaks or re-entering a research career after a break
- making part-time work or job sharing available at all levels (and ensuring it is genuinely part-time in terms of the number of hours worked and not just paid on a part-time basis)
- support for those returning to work after having a child
- ensuring that researchers who take a break to have children are not subject to age discrimination or assumptions about the appropriate age for reaching certain career milestones when they return to the labour market
- adequate childcare facilities
- homeworking arrangements for all or part of the week
- ensuring that the timing of meetings *etc.* does not assume that individuals have no domestic responsibilities.

This was one area where sectoral differences did emerge, with women in the Civil Service at least having access to many of these policies, and therefore a mechanism being in place for women seeking to combine work and family life. While they may not always have worked out well in practice, several

government researchers did point out that family friendly working arrangements had improved significantly. They viewed this as a positive step toward greater equality in career progression.

The Medical Research Council has taken steps to ensure that its Fellowships and Training Awards are available to those returning to research following a career break and are available on a part-time basis. This gives women with caring responsibilities access to some highly prestigious awards, and is a policy which should be generally adopted by funding organisations.

6.3 Guidance through the career development maze

An issue consistently highlighted in our interviews as contributing to career success was the importance of knowing the 'rules of the game' and what to do in order to develop a research career. Interviewees stressed that they needed someone to make explicit the kind of behaviour required and the actions which are rewarded. Advice ranged from that on how to dress in order to be taken seriously, to the importance of publishing and being visible to senior individuals both in organisations and professional networks/bodies. A number of individuals had also benefited from the encouragement and support of other researchers. The lack of access to such encouragement, advice, and support is likely to contribute to women being less confident of their abilities and therefore their tendency to progress more slowly than many male colleagues in their careers.

Many of our interviewees had benefited from a mentoring relationship or participation in an appropriate network. Researchers beginning their careers need to be aware of the importance (and power) of networks, and strongly encouraged to participate in them. In this process, the support of a mentor to facilitate the introductory phase can be extremely valuable. An effective equal opportunity strategy will ensure that these benefits are available to all, and not just the lucky few.

Researchers are also likely to benefit from proper provision of career development, including training opportunities and regular appraisals. The latter, however, need to be undertaken by individuals trained in equal opportunities and aware of EO issues.

Care also needs to be taken to ensure that the requirements for entry to and progression within a research career are clearly defined and made thoroughly explicit. As one of our interviewees commented, there is a wealth of literature on good equal opportunities practice, and organisations employing researchers need to ensure that they are aware of it and follow best practice. In particular, the development of standard procedures for recruitment and promotion which are in accord with good EO practice is crucial. Reliance on subjective measures is likely to be problematic. One university researcher

called for terms such as 'substantive research' or 'an international reputation' to be closely specified to avoid them being used as a smokescreen for other less relevant characteristics.

6.4 The impact of institutional norms and values

Institutional norms and values reflect the culture of organisations. A recent evaluation of Opportunity 2000, a campaign to further equal opportunity for women, identified cultural change as a key dimension of equal opportunity strategies, although it is one that is most difficult to implement.

A number of cultural factors which contribute toward women's experience of work being different from that of men have been identified in this study. These include a tendency for:

- men to be accorded credibility in organisations, while women repeatedly have to demonstrate it — examples here include being mistaken for secretaries and being ignored in meetings
- the areas in which many women are interested in, or work on issues relating to women, to be less highly valued than other subjects
- career commitment to be assumed in men and for women to be taken less seriously (unless, it seems, they wear serious clothing such as suits).

In extreme cases institutional norms and values can make it difficult for women to challenge workplace harassment or bullying.

One of the consequences of working in such an environment is that some women lose confidence in their own value or that of their work. They are therefore less likely to challenge male colleagues whose behaviour undermines them.

Equal opportunities awareness training can help to make individuals aware of how their behaviour affects colleagues, and sensitise them to the influence of what seems to them to be 'normal' behaviour. A clear example here is raising awareness of the impact of the combative style some academics feel compelled to adopt on those less used to engaging in debates conducted in this manner, or who lack the confidence to participate.

Assertiveness training may help address some of these issues around confidence and provide women with the skills they need to challenge unacceptable behaviour. Unless, however, the more obvious sources of lack of confidence, *eg* being continually undermined or marginalised, are addressed at the same time the effect of such training may be short-lived. Ideally, then, assertiveness training will be backed up by an equal opportunities action programme or strategy which supports, rather than dismisses,

women (and men) who challenge problematic practices, attitudes and behaviours.

Access to role-models who have succeeded within a particular set of institutional norms and values may also help those seeking to negotiate their way in a less than ideal working environment.

6.5 Under-representation in specific disciplines

Women are less well represented in economics and geography than other social science disciplines. This may relate to the highly quantitative nature of some parts of these disciplines and therefore the general pattern of women not being attracted to maths- and science-based activities. If this is the case, the reasons behind women's decisions to turn away from these areas need to be investigated further.

The *Rising Tide* report highlighted the lack of role models as one factor behind the under-representation of women in science and technology. This may well apply to other disciplines in which women do not form a high proportion of members. Promoting the visibility of those women who have succeeded may therefore help to address the gender imbalance in these disciplines.

6.6 The contract researcher

A second area in which sectoral differences emerged in this study relates to the lack of a career structure for contract researchers, and the better career progression prospects in the government sector and many research institutes. Chapter 3 for example highlighted the difference between the situation of researchers in Research Centres, which are linked to universities, and the independent institutes, in terms of the availability of permanent or longer-term contracts. Women account for a high proportion of contract researchers. It is therefore worth highlighting some of the changes which could benefit this group.

A 1994 study on contract researchers recommended that some relatively straightforward policies could change some of the worst aspects of a contract research career:

> *'In order to provide continuity, the length of research contracts should be at least three, and preferably five years. Research proposals should be designed around existing staff — utilising and developing knowledge and skills . . . Proposals should accurately describe the job and must make adequate provision for the reward and recognition of experienced staff, career progress and all potential contingencies . . . In the medium term, research posts of unlimited duration should be created and allowed for in central and departmental budgets . . . There would be a unified career structure for research and teaching staff with flexibility for individuals to interchange between these roles . . . There are other aspects that also contribute to a more stressful and*

> *unpleasant working environment ... These include inequality of opportunity and related ills such as low status and exclusion from participative mechanisms, low pay, isolation, inadequate supervision and lack of access to appraisal and training. These problems also require proactive policies to be developed and implemented in order to redress them.'* (Bryson and Tulle-Winton, 1994)

Again, the ESRC could play a role in promoting these practices. Action here could include requiring the organisations it funds to demonstrate, as a minimum, progress toward implementing mechanisms for addressing these issues.

Of particular importance for contract researchers is recognition for the work they have undertaken. Currently, there is no requirement for the researchers who have undertaken the bulk of the work on the project to be credited in any publications. The BSA recommends that applications for funding: 'should clearly state who will be responsible for writing up the research and the appropriate credit that will be given to all those who have carried out the research' (BSA, 1994). This is a minimum requirement and the question of whether it is ethical not to include contract researchers who have made a substantive input to a project among the authors of publications based on their research needs to be addressed.

The issue of the career prospects of contract researchers is addressed in the Draft Concordat on Contract Researchers and we have already stressed the importance of a proactive stance by the ESRC in implementing the proposals once agreement has been reached.

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Appendix 1: Organisations Contacted

Table A.1: Organisations contacted and response to request for data on members by gender

Organisation	Outcome
Association of Social Anthropologists	Data not recorded
British Educational Research Association	Data not recorded
British Psychological Society	Data supplied
British Sociological Association	Data supplied
Housing Studies Association	Data supplied
Institute of British Geographers – RGS	Data supplied
LARIA (Local Authorities Research and Intelligence Association)	Data not recorded, information on Steering Group members supplied
Operational Research Society	Data not recorded
Political Studies Association	Data not recorded
Regional Studies Association	Data not recorded
Royal Economic Society	Data not recorded
Social Policy Association	Data not recorded but special analysis undertaken
Royal Anthropological Institute	Data not recorded, membership list offered
Market Research Society	Data supplied
Social Research Association	Data supplied

Source: IES

Appendix 2: The Questionnaire

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Confidential to the Institute for Employment Studies

Please answer the following questions as fully as you are able by ticking the boxes or writing in the spaces provided. Please return the completed questionnaire to IES in the reply-paid envelope provided. If you have any queries, please contact Dr Jo Rick at IES: telephone 01273 686751. Thank you for your co-operation.

Introduction

The aim of this survey is to gain a better understanding of the profile of men and women in major UK social science research centres and independent research organisations. The questionnaire asks you to provide details of the numbers of men and women at each grade within your organisation. In order to improve comparability across different organisations, we also ask you for the salary bands associated with your grading structure.

1. Your Organisation

	men	women
a) Please give the total number of employees in your organisation (head count)	☐	☐
b) How many of these employees are research (or lecturing) staff?	☐	☐

c) The table below has seven columns, please complete them in the following way with reference to the research (or lecturing) staff included in b) above

column 1 the main research or lecturing grades in your organisation
column 2 the minimum salary point for each grade
column 3 the maximum salary point for each grade
column 4 the number of **women** working **full time** at each grade
column 5 the number of **women** working **part time** (*ie* contracted to work up to and including 30 hours) at each grade
column 6 the number of **men** working **full time** at each grade
column 7 the number of **men** working **part time** (*ie* contracted to work up to and including 30 hours) at each grade

1. Job Title or Grade	2. Salary Min	3. Salary Max	4. Women Full Time	5. Women Part Time	6. Men Full Time	7. Men Part Time

d). Do you have a written policy on equal opportunities? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please write below or attach to this questionnaire

.....

.....

.....

2. Ethnic Background

a) Using the grades listed for previous question, please indicate the numbers of men and women employees in research (or lecturing) grades in your organisation from the following ethnic backgrounds

1. Black (please include in this category employees who are Black African, Black Caribbean or Black other);
2. Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi;
3. Other (please include in this category the following groups of employees; Chinese, other Asian, Black (mixed), other (mixed) and other (non-mixed);
4. White.

	1. Black		2. Indian Pakistani/Bangladeshi		3. Other		4. White	
Job Grade	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men

3. Type of Contract

a) Please write in the number of men and women research (or lecturing) staff employed on each of the following types of contract

Contract Type	Women Full Time	Women Part Time	Men Full Time	Men Part Time
Permanent (Not Fixed Term)				
Fixed Term (3 years and over)				
Fixed Term (more than 1 year but less than 3 years)				
Fixed Term (less than 1 year)				
Rolling Contract				
Other *(please specify)*				

b) Do you have an organisational policy on flexible working hours?

Yes ☐ *please write below or attach to questionnaire*

No ☐ *please give details of your standard working hours*

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the envelope provided to The Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 4EE

Appendix 3: Draft Concordat on Contract Research

DRAFT: A FRAMEWORK FOR CAREER MANAGEMENT OF CONTRACT RESEARCH STAFF IN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES: A CONCORDAT BETWEEN THE RESEARCH COUNCILS AND ROYAL SOCIETY, AND THE COMMITTEE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS AND PRINCIPALS AND OTHER BODIES

1. This concordat sets standards for the career management and conditions of employment of researchers employed by universities and colleges on fixed-term or similar contracts and funded through the Research Councils' or the Royal Society's research grants or analogous schemes.

2. The Research Councils and the Royal Society will expect the universities and colleges to comply with the standards in paragraph 17, and will work closely with them to encourage, enable, and monitor the implementation of those standards.

3. The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) recognises the importance of establishing good management practice for contract research staff, and commends the standards to its members.

4. The arrangements for reviewing the concordat are at paragraph 35.

BACKGROUND

5. Much research in universities and colleges is funded on a fixed-term basis by companies, research charities, Government Departments and the Research Councils. In turn, the universities employ staff, generally known as "contract research staff", through fixed-term or similar contracts to carry out the research.

6. The Research Councils and CVCP recognise that fixed-term grants will continue to play a major part in the funding and management of research in universities and colleges. Contract research staff make a significant contribution to that research. New, especially post-doctoral, staff bring fresh ideas, techniques and energy, and enable universities and colleges to respond flexibly to the opportunities and the needs expressed by funding bodies.

7. The parties to this concordat accept that:

- those recruited to work as contract research staff should be able to benefit from the experience;

- they may use the period of employment to test out their suitability for further research inside or outside academia and to acquire a wider range of competencies and experience;

- some may have the potential to become research leaders or to obtain a longer-term university or college post which combines teaching and research;

- some may be employed by a university or college over the medium to long-term to work on a succession of research projects;

- many have an important role to play deploying their expertise and skills in a variety of employment, not only research and development, outside academia.

8. However, the parties recognise that:

- despite the variety of possible career paths, many contract research staff currently appear to hold an expectation of just one, namely an established career in academia or, exclusively, academic research, even though this is realistic for only a minority;

- this expectation creates tensions due to the limited opportunities, the highly competitive market for established posts, and the insecurity of a pattern of fixed-term contracts. Those tensions have been compounded by the demands of other priorities on scarce resources, resulting in less investment in the career management of contract research staff than might otherwise have been the case;

-.the result has been that some talented and trained staff may have been unnecessarily lost from research;

others left to drift from contract to contract for the want of informed guidance; and morale and overall productivity also suffer.

9. The challenge which is therefore presented is to manage the tensions better, and to ensure appropriate investment in career management.

"REALISING OUR POTENTIAL"

10. The universities and colleges, as the employers, are responsible for the management of all their staff, including terms and conditions of employment, staff development, and the balance between established staff and contract research staff.

11. However, the Research Councils have an interest in contract research staff because the achievement of their missions through research conducted in the universities and colleges depends critically on the supply and development of well-trained, talented and motivated research staff within the universities. The Councils have an explicit responsibility for the production of trained people to meet the needs of research user communities in the universities, colleges and elsewhere; the Royal Society has similar aims. In addition, the provision of grants, fellowships and other forms of research support by the Research Councils and Royal Society, and the terms and conditions on which the funds for those are given, influence directly the management of contract research staff by the university and college employers.

12. The White Paper "Realising Our Potential: A Strategy for Science, Engineering and Technology" recognised that more effective career management of contract research staff, which enabled men and women with a talent for research to look forward to rewarding and satisfying careers inside or outside academia, would require action from the universities and colleges and the funding bodies. It asked the Research Councils to work with university and college representatives with two objectives in view:

i. more effective career management and deployment of contract research staff by the university and college employers;

ii. the Research Councils' grant-making should help the universities and colleges discharge those responsibilities, and the Councils should look at the scope to put greater emphasis on longer-term or more personal forms of research support.

13. This concordat between the Research Councils, Royal Society and CVCP provides a framework within which the universities, colleges, and funding bodies will work to achieve those objectives, including arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.

PRINCIPLES OF THE FRAMEWORK

14. The Research Councils, Royal Society and CVCP agree that the framework for the more effective career management of contract research staff should be based on the following principles:

i. promoting the active personnel and career management of contract researchers, recognising the important contribution they make to the success of their employing institutions, including the dissemination of research results and new techniques;

ii. acceptance by the universities of the importance appraisal and career guidance for contract researchers, to ensure that they receive appropriate career advice, support, and before it is too late to make a career change;

iii. an understanding between the Research Councils and Royal Society and the universities and colleges of their respective roles and responsibilities

(a) in meeting the costs associated with management of these staff, including career guidance and retraining or other appropriate arrangements to realise broader opportunities upon the expiry of the contract researcher's fixed-term appointment;

(b) in keeping under review funding levels for personal or longer-term forms of support in academic research.

15. These principles are elaborated in the remainder of the concordat.

STANDARDS OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

16. The responsibility for determining the detailed personnel and career management arrangements for contract research staff is for the universities and colleges as the employers.

17. However, the Research Councils and the Royal Society will wish to be satisfied, as a key condition of providing grants and fellowships to the universities and colleges, that those institutions have in place and apply effective policies ensuring standards for the following aspects of the career management of contract researchers:

i. recruitment, so that the opportunities provided by contract research posts are, as far as possible, used

– to provide research training and continuing development for researchers at an early stage of a research career, which may subsequently be pursued inside or outside academia; or

– for the planned career development of existing contract staff, again with the possibility of that development subsequently

taking place outside as well as inside academia; or

– as "re-entry" routes for researchers who have taken time out from their careers;

ii. performance management arrangements, so that the overall performance of research supervisors is monitored to ensure that they provide effective research environments for the training and development of researchers. In addition, there should be in place systems of:

supervision, in order that contract researchers gain the maximum benefit from the training and development opportunities provided by the research environment in which they work;

regular appraisal, enabling the contract researcher and his or her supervisor – and ultimately the university or college as the employer – to form the best possible assessment of, and feedback on, the individual's potential, whether for a career in research inside or outside academia or in some other direction;

iii. rewards and other terms and conditions of service for contract research staff (for example, rates of pay, provisions for leave and sick leave, pensions, access to facilities) which are in line with those for established staff, thus avoiding the tendency for contract researchers to feel isolated from,

and disadvantaged in relation to those groups of employees. A key element is an assurance of equal opportunities and the elimination of practices linked to the short-term nature of contracts which indirectly discriminate against women in science. Maternity leave and pay provisions for contract staff should be in line with the provisions for

established staff, subject to the fixed-term period of the employment contract;

iv. in-service training in the form of appropriate specialist or general training. Demonstrating and teaching duties should be encouraged within the limits set by grant conditions;

v. career guidance and development, including supportive provisions to facilitate mobility and a change of career direction for staff who do not wish to remain in research or are not suited to such a career, and encouragement of talented researchers with advice on opportunities inside and outside the employing institution;

vi. monitoring and reporting systems which enable an institution to track the progress and achievement of researchers.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

18. The management and operation of these policies will generally be for the university and college employers alone.

19. The salaries element of grants is intended to cover the "direct" costs of employing contract research staff for the duration of grants which result from the proper application of policies in line with the agreed standards. The salaries element will therefore provide for pay appropriate to responsibility (grade), merit pay, and pensions. These should be identified in the grant application (or will be allowed for in the cash-limiting of the award), enabling the Research Councils to meet them within the framework of cash-limited grants.

20. An application for funding for one or more named members of contract research staff should include provision for salary costs which takes account of the research responsibilities within the new grant, but also, where relevant, the previous experience and professional contribution of those staff.

Such applications may seek provision for promotion during the lifetime of the new grant where the possibility is foreseen by the employing institution, the grounds are justified in the application, and the promotion will be made in accordance with the policies and procedures of the employing institution.

21. Contract research staff are generally paid on one of two different sets of salary scales according to whether their employment is in an "old" university or in a "new" university or higher education college. The Research Councils will provide for salaries on the basis of spine points on the salary scales issued by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) in respect of "old" universities, and use corresponding salary values in respect of contract research staff employed by "new" universities and colleges.

22. Where a grant application includes provision for named contract research staff, the Research Councils will normally expect to announce funds at the level requested; however, they reserve the right to offer support at an alternative level if considered appropriate to the research responsibilities of the project.

23. In the case of unnamed contract research staff, the salaries element will normally provide for an appointment at spine point 6 (£15,986 as at 1 April 1995 excluding London allowance) which is the third point of Research Grade IA. Provision may however be made for an appointment at higher points, including grade ranges II or III, where the application so requests it and has made explicit, to the Council's satisfaction, that the research responsibilities would justify such an appointment and that the project would offer the opportunity for the career development of a more experienced individual.

24. The salaries element of grants may be used to provide paid maternity leave and sick pay to members of contract research staff who fulfil the relevant qualifying conditions of the employing institution.

25. As a special initiative which contributes to the wider policy of encouraging the participation of women in research, the Research Councils

    i. will provide additional funding (which should be claimed, as necessary, at the end of the award as an "exceptional item") to provide for the additional final cost on the grant of making a substitute appointment to compensate for the whole, or part, of a period of paid maternity leave of a member of contract research staff funded by a Research Council, provided always that the direct salary costs of the substitute do not exceed those of the member of staff on paid maternity leave;

    ii. may extend the duration of a grant for a period equivalent to the maternity leave taken by a member of contract research staff for which no substitute appointment has been made, so that the project may be completed.

26. The Research Councils and Royal Society will not provide funding to meet the potential redundancy costs of contract research staff whose employment ends on the expiry of the fixed-term contract. However, individual Councils may agree to contribute appropriately to contractual redundancy payments at the termination of open-ended appointments which they had exceptionally approved.

27. Since the dual-support transfer, the Research Councils provide a payment which is a standard percentage addition (40 per cent) of the staffing element of the "direct" costs of a research grant. Those funds are intended to meet the "indirect" costs of the research in accordance with the dual support arrangements. They therefore enable institutions to support, among other things, personnel administration and management, and in-service training.

28. The universities and colleges, on the one hand, and the Research Councils and Royal Society on the other will work

to ensure as far as possible that applications are submitted, decisions taken and new grant announcements made so that fair recruitment procedures can be followed by the employing institutions; and that the renewal or extension of existing grants will be as early as possible so that career insecurity is reduced and disruption to the research effort is minimised.

WIDER ISSUES

29. In the provision of career guidance and development, the universities, colleges, Research Councils and Royal Society will need to work closely together:

i. the Research Councils and Royal Society share a common interest with the universities and colleges in identifying potential research leaders, and ensuring that career openings exist for them in research. Research fellowships offer a good stepping-stone, after an initial period of post-doctoral work, to a more permanent academic or research post, not necessarily always in academia. Individual institutions will wish to consider whether to provide such fellowships as part of their staffing policy, and the Research Councils and the Royal Society will develop their own provisions in balance with other forms of research funding providing longer-term support for essential and active research leaders;

ii. university and college employers should keep under review the career opportunities for contract research staff who, whether or not research leaders, have proven their capacity to make a significant contribution over the longer-term to the research aims of the institution, and if so how to fund them. Advice to the individual concerned is likely to depend on his or her potential, on whether the research opportunities require his or her in-depth expertise, and on whether the costs of such support, as reflected in

project or programme grants, infrastructure awards or such other individual forms of longer-term support as a Research Council may provide, represent good value for money for the Council. The Research Councils will consider such cases on that basis and on their merits;

iii. many other contract research staff may be better advised to leave academic research after a doctorate or initial period of post-doctoral research for employment in industry, commerce or the public sector. The Research Councils are exploring a variety of funding mechanisms to encourage such transfer and they will consider further provisions in this area.

30. In addition, the Research Councils may be able to provide forms of research support which are not directly relevant to career management of contract research staff, but which do affect the number of such staff in universities and colleges. Examples include fellowships or research grants which enable principal investigators to concentrate on research by funding the costs of replacement teachers, and research studentships rather than research assistantships. Where appropriate, the Research Councils will keep their level of support for such alternatives under review in the light of their individual missions.

MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION

31. As conditions of grant, the Research Councils will require universities and colleges to provide

i. contract research staff with a statement of their provisions for career management and conditions of employment;

ii. some basic information in grant/fellowship reports on the training and development benefits which have flowed from individual grants and fellowships, and on the destination of contract

research staff and fellows after a grant or fellowship.

32. The Research Councils, Royal Society and CVCP will monitor compliance with all aspects of this concordat.

33. In deciding whether to award grants, the Research Councils will take into account the extent to which the particular institutions or departments have complied with the provisions of this concordat.

34. Concerns about non-compliance by the Research Councils should be addressed initially to the Research Council or Councils concerned, and subsequently, if need be, to the Director-General of Research Councils; and about non-compliance by an employer to the university or college concerned and subsequently, if need be, to the appropriate Research Council or Councils.

EVALUATION

35. The Research Councils, Royal Society and CVCP will meet initially after 18 months and subsequently every two years to review this concordat and its implementation, taking account of e.g.:

- relevant initiatives by and examples of good practice within individual Research Councils, the Royal Society, universities and colleges;
- levels of compliance;
- levels of support for the forms of funding identified in paragraphs 29 and 30;
- information derived from grant/fellowship final reports and destinations data;
- the outcome of equal opportunity monitoring of contract research staff appointments, including the proportion and distribution by grade of women;

- any other data they think relevant such as the costs of implementation or the views of employers outside academia.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CAREERS

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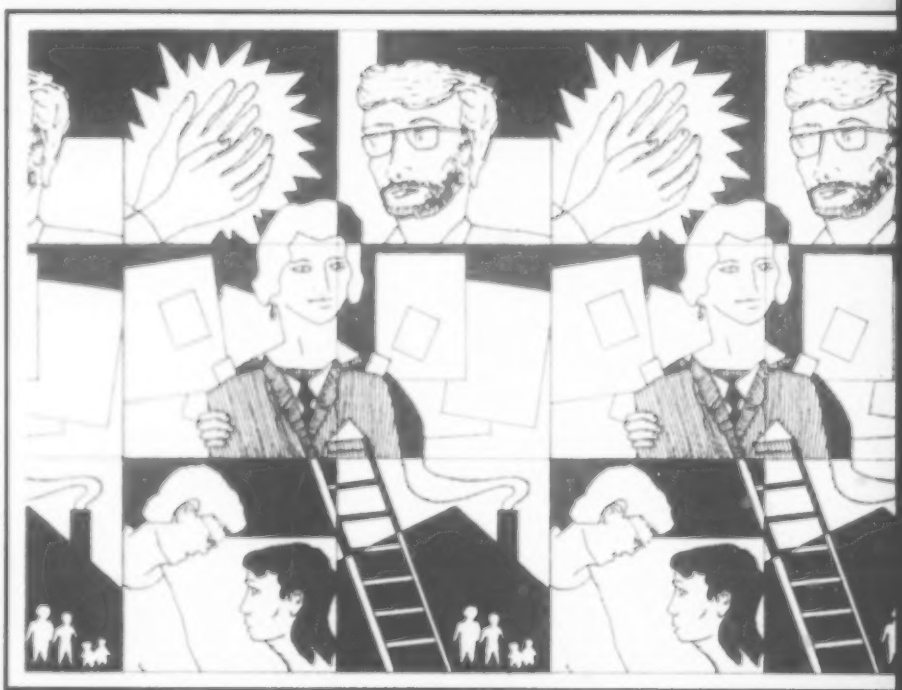
Commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council, the focus of this study is on women's careers in social science research. Women now account for 45 per cent of the workforce, with increasing participation in the professions. Nevertheless they remain concentrated in lower levels where their full potential is unrealised. This study assesses the current situation of women researchers in social sciences, by sector and discipline. It examines issues of career prospects and barriers, as raised during interviews with women researchers at different stages in their careers. Recommendations are made for encouraging equal opportunities.



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